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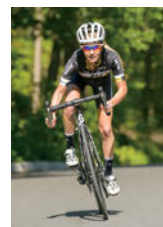
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Scott-3 Rox Racing rider **Mikaela Kofman**, cross-trains on the road on her Scott Addict. Read our Q&A with her on p.96.

Photo: Marc Landry





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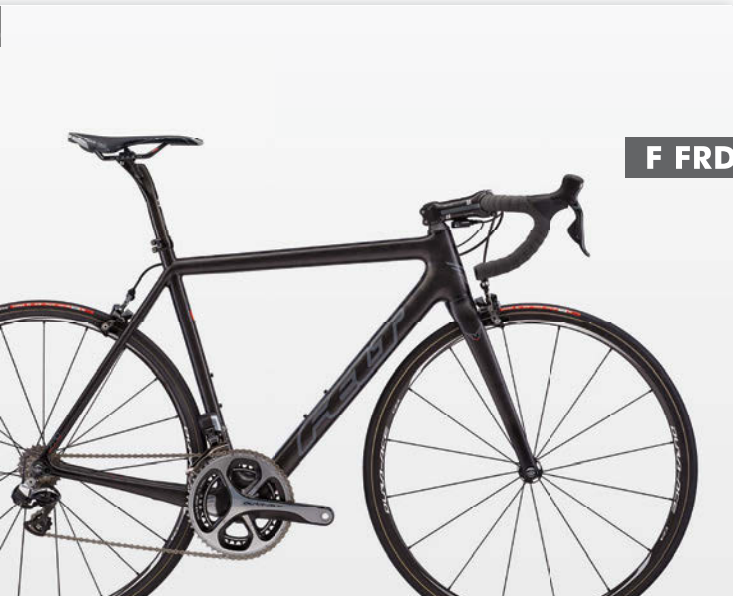
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Remember, It's Fun, Too

Emily Batty chats
with fans at the
2010 mountain
bike world
championships
in Mont-Sainte-
Anne

At the Cannondale-Garmin team launch In January, I found myself deep in conversation with the owner of three significant bike shops in the Toronto area. We were surrounded by people and gear – such as the bikes Cannondale-Garmin riders would use in upcoming WorldTour races – centred around the top level of cycling. The topic of our conversation, though, might have seemed a little out of place within such a celebration of high performance. We were talking about ebikes.

Name a bike company, any major bike company, and you'll likely find that it has an ebike in its lineup. They are bikes you have to pedal, not the crypto-scooters you see on roads (and sometimes on recreational trails). The bike-shop owner had seen how well these pedelec bikes were doing in Europe and was betting that Canada was ready to hop on board. His reasoning went beyond market analyses or any charts and graphs. It was a simple reason: ebikes are fun.

He said, when it comes to bikes in general, we talk too much of suffering. I couldn't argue with him on that point. During any broadcast of a bike race, you could make a drinking game out of the number of times the commentators use the words "suffer" and "suffering." Afterward, you wouldn't be fit to ride your own bike. In this issue, contributor Paul Gains delves right into how the pros suffer in difficult races and with injury. It's an inspiring read (p.48) for someone like you and me who likes to dig deep on a group ride, gran fondo or race.

The shop owner, however, was concerned that all the talk we do about suffering is a turnoff for people who are not yet in love with the bike. He had a point. Why would you do something that everyone says is painful? He stressed that ebikes can show more people what cycling is really about: not suffering, but fun. Writer Dan Dakin, a longtime mountain bike, road and cyclocross rider, has looked deeply into the world of ebikes. He, too, was curious about the rise of the pedelecs. I'm not giving too much away from his fantastic piece (p.80), but that topic of fun does come up.

I think if you look closely at how those suffering pros speak about their jobs, not only in Gains's story, but also Dean Campbell's profile of Mont-Sainte-Anne and its 25 years of hosting the world's top mountain bikers (p.64), you'll find that they still feel riding a bike is fun. You just can't get away from that fun factor. It's there on every bike you pedal.

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LETTERS

LETTER OF THE ISSUE

A good move for a cyclist

I decided to commit to riding more last summer and thought the best way to do this was to join a cycling club. This turned out to be a great experience and I look forward to many more rides this summer. I joined the Amici Per la Vita (Friends for Life) cycling club in Niagara Falls, Ont. They made me feel very welcome and ensured that safety and fun goes hand in hand on all rides. The essential stop at Timmies was a great chance to fuel up and hear about the next epic ride in the works. I strongly encourage everyone to check out their local cycling club to ensure the "right fit" and then enjoy the open roads with new friends who share the same love of cycling.

Doug MacDonald
Fonthill, Ont.

High praise

I just received my latest *Canadian Cycling Magazine* (Tour de France special). When I first pulled it out of the mailbox, I thought it was a catalogue: it's thick. One of the things that has usually disappointed me with most Canadian magazines is the lack of volume they have, even when content is good. Your magazine doesn't lack here. Yes, some will argue there is a lot of advertising. How is this a bad thing? It's all cycling-related. It also has an incredible amount of high-quality, informative and well-written material. Keep up the good work.

Jim Guy
Sydney Mines, N.S.

Letter of the Issue



Doug MacDonald's letter is our letter of the issue, which wins him a pair of Continental Grand Prix 4-Season tires (valued at \$80 each). **Send us your letters for a chance to win a pair of Continental tires for your bike. Email your comments to info@cyclingmagazine.ca**

Now on cyclingmagazine.ca

Check out our extensive coverage of Canada's biggest stage race, the Tour of Alberta. Also in September, we'll be reporting from Interbike to bring you the latest in cycling gear.

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Pilot: Andreu "LaConti-Guy" Lacondeguay

Drift...



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Stephen Cheung

Commuter Workouts, p.42

Stephen Cheung, PhD, is a scientist and Canada Research Chair at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., where he studies the effects of extreme temperature and altitude on human physiology and performance. Along with Hunter Allen, Stephen is the author of the book *Cutting-Edge Cycling* on the science of cycling, and is currently co-editing a followup with Dr. Mikel Zabala from the Movistar Pro Cycling team. Cheung puts his advice to work, commuting by bike to university for the past 30 years without ever owning a parking pass.



Jeff Shmoorkoff

Taking on Paris-Brest-Paris, p.54

Jeff Shmoorkoff got his first bike at 18 years old while studying at the University of Victoria. In 1986, he cycle-toured across Canada. Some long days inspired him to take up randonneuring. He founded the Alberta Randonneurs in 1987 (a.k.a. Rocky Mountain Randonneurs). When not spending hours and hours in the saddle, he practises family medicine in Edmonton. He and his lovely wife Cheryl are hockey parents for their two boys, Stephen and Austin.

CONTRIBUTORS

Dan Dakin

Ebikes for Everyone, p.80

A former award-winning daily newspaper reporter, Dan Dakin is freelance journalist based in the Niagara region of Ontario. He's the founding editor of *Canadian Cycling Magazine* and is now a regular contributor. When not pounding away on a keyboard, he's getting muddy racing cyclocross bikes for Teamg05 Cycling. He's now researching how to put a battery-powered pedal-assist motor into the frame of his 'cross bike.



Photos: Courtesy, Will Fast, Courtesy

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AUGUST

1-2 The **mountain bike World Cup** returns to Mont-Sainte-Anne. The venue just east of Quebec City has been hosting the top MTBers from around the globe for 25 years. Read the full story of MSA on p.64.

7-15 Paracyclists hit the roads and the track for the **2015 Parapan Am Games in Toronto**. There will be a host of cycling events. On the road, there are men's and women's road races and time trial events. Over on the track, men and women have sprint, keirin, team sprint, team pursuit and omnium.

14 The final **Canada Cup** of the season for both XC and DH runs at Whistler, B.C.

16 Ride in honour of Const. Andrew J. Potts in **Andy's Ride**. In 2005, the Ontario Provincial Police officer died in a motor-vehicle accident while on duty. Now, the Andy Potts Memorial Foundation raises money for charities in the Muskoka, Ont., region. This year, funds from the ride will go to Hospice Muskoka.



22-Sept. 13

Vuelta a España sets off in Spain. For more on the Spanish Grand Tour, see p.18.

Looking Ahead

Sept. 19



La Classique des Appalaches

"The reason that it is *magnifique*: the profile has 2,700 m of climbing, which is quite a lot," says Ag2r-La Mondiale's Hugo Houle about La Classique des Appalaches. The rider from Sainte-Perpétue, Que., knows the roads of the new event well. He grew up riding not far from the route of the gran fondo and elite race. Houle is also an ambassador for La Classique des Appalaches. "The views will be amazing at that time of year because the trees are changing colours," he adds.



It's not just the autumn leaves that make for a well-timed race. For fondo riders, the late September date means they can prepare all summer for the 135-km challenge with all that elevation gain. There's also a 110-km route with roughly 1,800 m of climbing and a 65-km route with 300 m of climbing. For the longest route, the Appalachian Classic, the end has a nasty kick to it. "The bottom of the final 2.6 km climb is really steep, 12 or 13 per cent for sure, as steep as the bottom of Mont-Mégantic for 500 m to 700 m. Then it goes to 6 or 7 per cent, and then it kicks up again."

The fondo riders who ride the 135-km route will face the same roads as the pros and elite riders who will complete in the race the following day. Fondo riders will also ride 45 km of gravel roads. "I would ride 26c tires," Houle advises. "They'll help you on the gravel sectors with more comfort and you won't lose speed on the normal pavement." Other advice the pro has for riding gravel: "You always have to have your head up to watch for holes." (theappalachianclassic.com)

SEPTEMBER

1-6 The **mountain bike and trials world championships** descend on Andorra. Will Catharine Pendrel be able to defend her rainbow jersey? Read what Pendrel has to say about going deep in competition on p.48.



12 Will Cory Wallace win his third **mountain bike marathon national championship** in a row? He and other pros will ride for the maple-leaf jersey on this day at Horseshoe Valley Resort in Ontario. Read about Wallace's impressions of the Titan Desert race on p.14.

19 The **uci cyclocross World Cup** comes to Canada. Three days after the World Cup makes its North American debut in Las Vegas, the pros head to Montreal for the first-ever Canadian event. Get the background on the new World Cup race on p.62.

20-27 The **uci road world championships** run in Richmond, Va. Expect to see many top Canadian women – such as Leah Kirchmann, Jasmin Glaesser and Laura Brown – riding in the team time trial as their domestic U.S. teams go for gold on home soil.

2-7 Mountains! They have mountains this year in the **Tour of Alberta**. Learn more about the third edition of the six-day stage race on p.60.

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Gordon Singleton's Marinoni

When the Canadian government boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics, Gordon Singleton turned an unfortunate situation into a golden opportunity when he travelled to Mexico City to take on world sprint records.

At the time, Singleton was sponsored by the American Machine Foundry (AMF), a company well known for its recreational equipment. AMF purchased bikes for its team from renowned bike manufacturer Guiseppe Marinoni, based near Montreal. Singleton, who met Marinoni on several occasions, describes the frame builder as an innovative gentleman. "Marinoni bikes were state-of-the-art. They were the first to have teardrop-shape tubing and the beginnings of aerodynamics in bicycles," Singleton says. Marinoni bicycles were handcrafted with Columbus tubing and measured to fit the rider exactly. "The Marinoni was a perfect design with great geometry. Not only was it sturdy, it steered and handled excellent at high speeds," Singleton says.

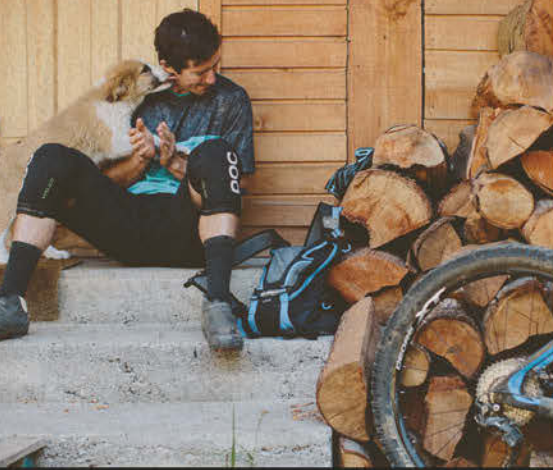
During final preparations at the Agustín Melgar Olympic Velodrome, Singleton was approached by Felice Benotto, a prominent bike distributor from Mexico. "Mr. Benotto said, 'If you use my handlebar tape, I will pay you us\$500 for each record you break.' At the time, that was a lot of money," recalls Singleton. During a 24-hour period spanning Oct. 9 to 10, he broke three world records – 200 m flying start (10.58 seconds), 500 m flying start (27.31 seconds) and 1,000 m standing start (1.03.8 seconds) – on his Marinoni bike. "After I broke the world records, I remember getting in a taxi with my coach and driving into Mexico City to Benotto's shop and he paid up," Singleton says.

The Marinoni hangs in Singleton's office, complete with original flat-spoke wheels, Wolber tires with cotton casings and, of course, Benotto handlebar tape. "Thanks to the Internet, I have been able find equipment from that era to restore my bikes to original form," Singleton says. —Jill Tham 

BELOW
Gord Singleton's
Marinoni



Photo: Dan Dakin





Hesjedal sprints to cross the Stage 18 finish line ahead of overall leader Alberto Contador at the 2015 Giro d'Italia

Ryder Hesjedal's grit at the Giro d'Italia

Ryder Hesjedal lost any chance of winning his second Giro d'Italia after dropping five minutes on his rivals on Stage 4, the same one in which his young Italian teammate, Davide Formolo, took a huge victory. But the relentless aggression of the Canadian's riding, whether it was by getting into the day's breakaway, bridging to moves or attacking at every opportunity, makes a case for Hesjedal always to race with an initial deficit. Hesjedal's already a Giro legend for his thrilling back-and-forth battle with Joaquim Rodriguez to win the 2012 edition; but with Hesjedal's 2014 and 2015 fight-back performances, he's become one of the most notable Giro racers of the decade.

In the final week of this year's Italian Grand Tour, Hesjedal rode with élan and power, seemingly always on the attack when the road tilted upward. He rose from 13th overall to 5th in five stages to match his second-best Grand Tour result in the 2010 Tour de France. The two consecutive runner-up spots to Fabio Aru on the last mountain days frustrated Hesjedal, but they also bounced him up from 9th.

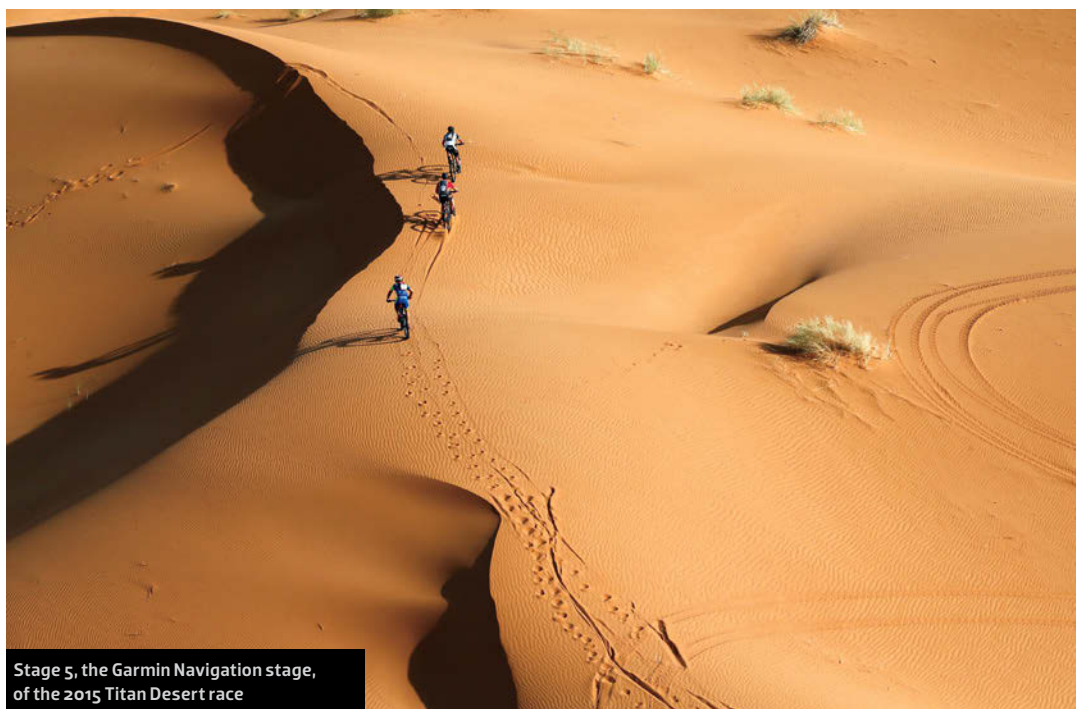
Impressive, bold climbing aside, it was his strong Stage 14 time trial, with retired teammate David Millar trailing in a Maserati, that put Hesjedal into position to break into the top 10 before Milan. Sixteenth was Hesjedal's best WorldTour chrono result since he won the Giro in 2012, and his best since the Tour de Suisse in 2013. But those were short time trials, not almost 60 km.

"I'm super-happy with the race," Hesjedal said after he had a week to reflect on the Giro. "It's always difficult to come out of the race fifth overall and close on some stage wins. But it's also hard not to be happy. Those kind of results don't come easy."—Rob Sturney

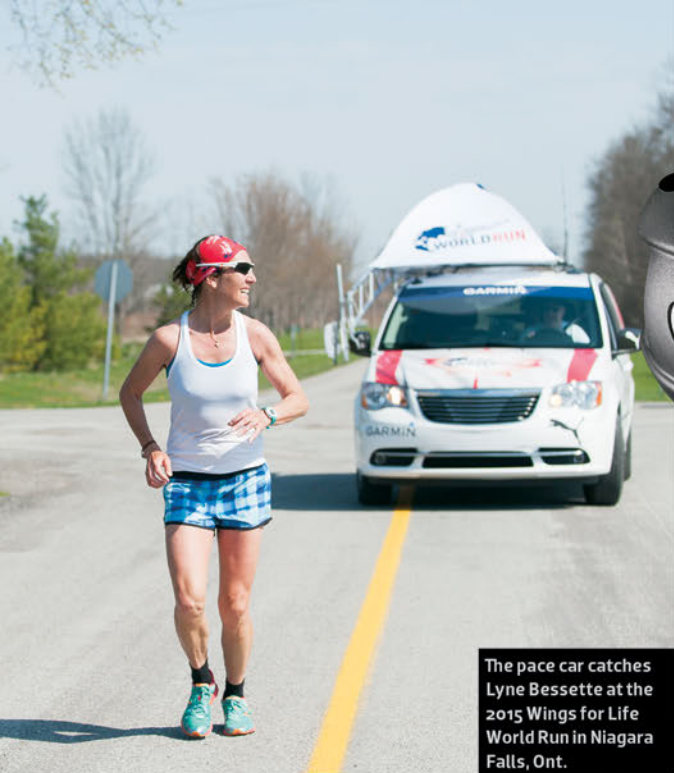
Cory Wallace and Morocco's Titan Desert race

The wake-up call of three camels grunting as their Moroccan herders prepared them for a day on the dunes was our signal to start another day at the Titan Desert. It was Stage 5 of the six-day race through the high Atlas Mountains and the outskirts of the Sahara. It was also the Garmin Navigation stage, in which there were no course markings. All 630 racers had the co-ordinates of four mandatory checkpoints, three optional feed stations and the finish line. The race helicopter took off above us as the race pistol went off and we created a huge dust storm as we charged toward the golden dunes ahead. Hitting the mountains of sand, we deflated our tires to roughly 7 p.s.i., providing traction to navigate through the soft dunes. If you picked the right lines, it was possible to ride 80 per cent of it before hitting the other side 4 km later. We then pumped up the tires and headed off to the next checkpoint, toward Algeria. The 100-km stage was a giant Easter egg hunt mixed in with some hard riding as we tried to find the rest of the checkpoints and the eventual finish line at the green oasis of Merzouga. Even though I was the first rider over the dunes, I finished 18th on the day. That night, I dislocated my shoulder in camp. I was allowed to keep racing, but I was just surviving the stages so I wouldn't have to ride on the buses. After the Titan Desert, it was off to Europe for racing and preparation for mountain bike marathon world championships in Italy at the end of June.—Cory Wallace

Photos: Ansa / Daniel Dai Zennaro / RCS Sport, Titan Desert by Garmin



Stage 5, the Garmin Navigation stage, of the 2015 Titan Desert race



The pace car catches Lyne Bessette at the 2015 Wings for Life World Run in Niagara Falls, Ont.

Lyne Bessette finds success with a pair of running shoes

Retired pro cyclists often turn to other sports to get their competitive juices flowing, but Canadian Lyne Bessette is proving just how much multi-sport talent she has. Less than two months after turning 40 years old, the two-time Olympic cyclist and gold medal-winning Paralympic cycling pilot won the 2015 Wings for Life World Run in Niagara Falls, Ont., on May 3. The Red Bull-organized running race is held simultaneously in 35 countries on six continents around the globe. The Wings for Life event has a start line, but no set finish line. Half an hour after the runners take off, a catcher car with timing computers hanging off the side leaves the start line travelling at 15 km/h. As the hours go by, the timing car speeds up. When it passes you, your race is done. The 2015 race drew a remarkable 101,280 competitors worldwide. Bessette was the top Canadian woman, covering 42.44 km before being caught. That made her the fourth finisher overall out of 750 in Niagara Falls, and the 13th female finisher worldwide. Remarkably, Bessette's husband, professional cyclocross racer Tim Johnson, ran 38.21 km to finish sixth overall in Niagara Falls. Bessette's distance beat her 2014 mark by more than 4 km, but she had some unwanted motivation this year. While serving as a tour guide in Virginia a week before the race, one of her riders crashed hard on a downhill and ended up being airlifted from the scene with a serious back injury. "She's still in the hospital in Virginia, so I was totally running for her. She was my inspiration," Bessette said after the World Run win. The Wings for Life World Run is a fundraiser for spinal cord research and has raised millions of dollars this year. Red Bull picks up the tab for the entire organizing cost, meaning every dollar of registration fees goes directly to the cause. Bessette now has a year to decide where she would like to run in 2016 because every national winner gets a free trip to whichever World Run location they choose the following year. —DD



WHAT'S HOT

Bontrager Flare R tail light

\$70, bontrager.com

Lights aren't just for nighttime. Bontrager, which cites British and U.S. studies, says 80 per cent of cycling accidents happen during the day and 40 per cent of U.S. fatalities are hit from behind. In April, Bontrager released the Flare R. The company says the driver-attention-getting flash patterns are visible from 2 km away.

Forward Cycling Goods Saved by the Bell jersey

\$130, rideforward.com

You can ride with the gang from Bayside High School in mind. The colours, patterns and name of this jersey evoke the teen sitcom from the early '90s. The jersey is by Forward Cycling Goods, a Vancouver-based women's cycling apparel company. The piece is handmade in California and 10 per cent of its price goes to the charity Bikes Without Borders.



Bike Guard Curv bike case

\$1,400, bikecases.ca

The Bike Guard Curv bike case protects your bike when you travel. It's made of durable polypropylene. Inside, you can fit any road, mountain or tri bike with 29" wheels. To make packing your ride up easier, the cover comes off completely. Secure it once you're done with the two self-tightening buckles. C

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Will Canucks reign in Spain, or even show up?

by Larry Humber

How many Canucks will be on hand when the 2015 Vuelta launches near Marbella on Spain's south coast on Aug. 22? It's likely that Ryder Hesjedal will skip what is widely held to be the least prestigious of the Grand Tour events, as he battled for fifth overall in Giro during May and plans to attend his gran fondo on Aug. 23. But things can go awry, which can change a rider's plans. Look what happened in 2014, when both the Tour favourites, Tinkoff-Saxo's Alberto Contador and Sky's Chris Froome, crashed out early, only to re-emerge at the Vuelta, where they finished first and second. Had they posted solid results in France, it's unlikely either would have tackled Spain. In effect, the Vuelta gives unfilled riders another kick at the can.

We may never see another year like 2009, a breakthrough year for our riders at the Vuelta, with four saddling up, three of them with the Garmin team. Unfortunately, not one of the four went the distance, though emerging star Ryder Hesjedal, making just his second Grand Tour appearance, did take a stage. He pulled out after the 17th instalment. Teammate Christian Meier also called it quits after the 17th. Garmin's Svein Tuft and Cervélo's Dominique Rollin were long gone by that time, Tuft saying adios after the 14th stage and Rollin, the 12th.

BELOW
Chris Froome leads Alberto Contador on Stage 19 of the 2014 Vuelta a España

BOTTOM LEFT
Antoine Duchesne races in the 2014 Global Relay Canadian road cycling championships in Lac-Mégantic, Que.

BOTTOM CENTRE
Hugo Houle chats with fans during Stage 2 of the 2015 Giro d'Italia

Four non-finishers didn't say a lot about the Canadian contingent. We didn't send a single rider to Spain in 2010 or 2011, and only Rollin (then with FDJ, now with Cofidis) made the trip in 2012, finishing 153rd.

The past two years have been much more encouraging from a Canadian standpoint, with two riders sporting the maple leaf each of those years and Hesjedal again serving notice

that he's among the sport's elite. He finished a not-too-shabby 24th last year and also grabbed the 14th stage with an impressive late charge. He might have taken Stage 7 had he not taken a nasty spill when battling with the breakaway group. Guillaume Boivin made the trip both years, with a DNF in 2013 followed by 149th in 2014. Meier was also on board in 2013, this time with Orica-GreenEdge. He




THE SCENE

VUELTA A ESPAÑA



finished a respectable 82nd.

In June Chicoutimi's Antoine Duchesne announced that his French team Europcar had selected him for Spain. Fellow Quebecer Hugo Houle, in his third season with Ag2r-La Mondiale, has a chance. Houle made his Grand Tour debut earlier in the year at the Giro.

Too bad Hesjedal won't be around in August. He makes hay on the hills, and the 2015 Vuelta is alive with them with some 13 hill and mountain stages and only six on the flats, with team and individual time trials adding up to 21. The team time trial of 7.4 km will set the wheels in motion on Aug. 22. The 3,374.4 km race wraps up in Madrid, in the country's heartland, on Sept. 13. 

Photos: Graham Watson, Rob Jones, Ansa / Daniel Dal Zennaro / RCS Sport



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THE SCENE

PARIS VS ONTARIO

Province's cycling infrastructure funding raises questions

by Dan Dakin

Ontario may have cities named London and Paris, but when it comes to cycling infrastructure, the similarities with Europe end there. In a span of 24 hours in early April, Canada's most populated province

to 30 km/h, while bigger roads will get express bike lanes completely separated from traffic.

Paris also wants to increase its bike rental program, Vélib', which already has 283,000 subscribers. To do this, the city is looking into a fleet of power-assisted electric bikes for use in the more hilly areas.

Île-de-France cycling association spokeswoman Kiki Lambert told a local newspaper the goal is to improve both "comfort and security" for cyclists.

"Paris's cycling policy cannot be assessed in terms of the number of cycling lanes, but in the number of cyclists. More cycling lanes, lower driving speed and more bike stands all have a positive effect on that. It's a matter of safety by numbers, and I believe that has proven to be true in most cities across Europe," she said.

Hours after the Paris announcement, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation announced \$25 million in cycling infrastructure funding. The province currently has approximately 8,000 km of bike lanes and paths.

"This is a good thing but we need to do more."

"Our goal is to make Ontario the premier cycling province in Canada with options that connect people to their jobs, schools, parks and places of interest right across the province," said Glenn Murray, the province's minister of transportation and infrastructure. The funding is part of a 20-year strategy for getting people to live healthier lifestyles, to increase tourism and to help the environment through more sustainable transportation methods. Of the \$25 million, \$10 million will be available for municipalities to expand their local routes, improve signs or try pilot projects that could be used down the road elsewhere in Ontario. The other \$15 million will be spent to improve cycling infrastructure over the next three years on provincial highways and bridges, which will see more paved shoulders installed.

When asked if it's fair to compare Ontario and Paris, Peggy Nash, the NDP member of Parliament for the Parkdale-High Park section of Toronto said yes. Nash has pushed heavily for federal cycling safety legislation and said when compared to other places around the world, "Canada is clearly behind."

"Not that what Ontario is doing isn't useful, but we have put it into perspective. This is a good thing, but we need to do more," she said. Nash believes cycling issues should start as a federal mandate and then work their way down through the various levels of government. With a federal election coming up this autumn, she wants to see cycling issues become an election issue.

"It's not that there isn't progress, but surely we don't all have to reinvent the wheel. We can learn from other cities, other provinces and other countries that are out in front. We can work together to move this along a lot more quickly," she said.

HEAD TO HEAD

| | Ontario | Paris |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Population | 13.6 million | 2.2 million |
| Area (land) | 1,076,395 sq. km | 105 sq. km |
| New funding for cycling | \$25 million | \$160 million |

ABOVE
A Velib' bike rental station in Paris

and the biggest city in France made separate cycling infrastructure funding announcements that were almost comical in their disparities.

In Paris, city officials launched a \$160-million plan aimed at increasing the number of trips made by bicycle from 5 per cent of all trips currently to up to 15 per cent by 2020. To do that, officials plan to double the amount of bike lanes to 1,400 km from 700 km. Smaller roads will see bike lanes installed on both sides of the street with the vehicle speed limit reduced



THE ELEVEN

A new cycling experience.



Ashleigh Ball

Singer and musician finds inspiration and adventure on two wheels

by David McPherson

Ashleigh Ball beams with child-like excitement when she recalls her first ride – and first bicycle – her older sister's hand-me-down many years ago. "It was a white Norco with blue and purple neon splatters," said Ball, describing her first two-wheeler. "I made it my own, with my mom's help, by adding yellow handlebar streamers. I remember riding down the hill at Balaclava Park by my house without training wheels and feeling so proud."

Today, the musician, who is a member of the Vancouver-based indie-pop trio Hey Ocean! with David Beckingham and David Vertesi, carries this childhood passion for cycling into her daily commute to and from work. "I love that I can get there faster than if I drove," she said. "I also love that it's a form of transportation, but can also be a killer workout."

Growing up in Vancouver, Ball vacationed with her family in Whistler every summer. "We would bike around the valley trails to all the different lakes," she recalled. "We would often go camping over to the Island. My dad would always load up our bikes on the rack for the trip."



Another memorable cycling trip for Ball involves a close friend and a ferry ride to Gabriola Island a couple of years ago. "A friend was having a big party on his property," she recalled. "It was during a heat wave and we weren't really sure where we were going. We made it to the top of this hill on the island right as the sun was setting."

"We both started hollering like wild animals as we went bombing down this giant hill with the warmest evening wind at our backs and our arms out like wings," Ball continued. "We ended up riding all over the island in the pitch-black dark before we finally followed the sound of the music to the party."

Ball's favourite rides are along the West Coast shoreline: "Summertime beach excursions are the best when I bike out to Tower or Wreck Beach from my house on the east side with a backpack full of supplies or I ride along the Stanley Park Seawall to Third beach with a few pals."

These days, Ball's favourite bike is a sea-foam green 1980s Miele road bike with all-new components. "I call her Ariel," she said. The songwriter also has a vintage forest-green 1960s Raleigh Cruiser she calls "The Pickle." "He lives in my garage right now, but I plan on getting him up and running soon," she said.

Does a long ride on Ariel or The Pickle ever inspire the musician's muse? They sure do. "I make up melodies all the time while biking," she said. "I sing a lot, riding from place to place. I wrote a song called 'Bicycle' that's on our last album. It was inspired by a ride to visit a friend who was getting rid of all his worldly possessions and

FAST FACTS Ashleigh Ball

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Profession | Musician (vocalist/flutist of indie trio Hey Ocean!) |
| Lives | Vancouver |
| Bikes | 1980s Miele road bike; vintage forest-green 1960s Raleigh Cruiser |
| Fun Fact | Does the voice of Applejack, Rainbow Dash and others in the animated children's TV show <i>My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic</i> . |

moving to Central America; it just sort of came out as I was riding along. I like it when that happens."

As our conversation closes, I ask Ball whether she sees any other similarities between cycling and songwriting? "The similarities lie in the journey, I suppose," she concluded. "You set out with a destination in mind and you hit some hills along the way. You'll be pedalling against the wind and rain sometimes and things will get tricky, but once you get going and set the wheels in motion, it can be a real satisfying ride. The freedom you feel on a bike is like nothing else." 🍷



Danny Summerhill
p. Jonathan Dewich

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Contagious Mountain Bike Club

Riding all year in the Yukon, almost

by **Dean Campbell**

When Sierra van der Meer was new to Whitehorse, she was also new to mountain biking. Both the city and the sport quickly took hold of van der Meer, who has served as the president of the Contagious Mountain Bike Club for the past five years. "The sport was taking off in Whitehorse at the time, and the city had invested in a trail crew," said van der Meer, recalling her arrival in town.

As the club name implies, riders in Whitehorse have exhibited an enthusiasm for mountain biking that catches on. With 200 members in a city of less than 30,000 people, bikes have been integrated into the fabric of the town and though the daylight and darkness, the warmth of the midnight sun to the cold of winter weather.

The club offers a mix of events during summer and winter. The hallmark event of the year is the annual 24 Hours of Light, held on the weekend closest to the summer solstice. Riding lights are banned for the event, as the light of the sun never vanishes completely. "It's really reflective of how Yukoners are," said van der Meer. "There are about 150 participants, but never 150 racers out to win. People are celebrating the summer in a fun and relaxed vibe. You go out at 2 a.m. and the sun just dips below the horizon and twilight comes on. Then, at 3 a.m., it's sunrise."

Winter brings darkness, but opens up exciting new riding opportunities to those willing to venture out. Frozen lakes and rivers serve as new routes to access different terrain. Strong relationships with local snowmobile and cross-country ski clubs have developed even more riding

THE SCENE

CANADIAN CLUB


opportunities during the winter. "We have off-seasons in April and November," said van der Meer. "Snow biking has really taken off here. You can be on a mountain bike 47 weeks of the year if you want."

All this opportunity has grown from effective advocacy that favours partnerships with groups that might not normally be approached in other locations. Approaching the snowmobile club meant access to a huge trail network that had previously been off-limits. "One of our core beliefs is sharing," said van der Meer. "We don't focus on what trails are 'ours.' Instead of falling into an adversarial

relationship, we see what we can do together from the outset."

It helps that Whitehorse is a town full of people who enjoy active lifestyles. The enthusiasm means there is an active group that is willing to put in the effort to develop outdoor recreation activities. Contagious MTB Club runs the Yukon MTB championships, enduro races, a Dirt Girls series, kids' development programs and a suite of winter biking activities. Working with the town to help take on more trail stewardship has helped to build positive relationships.

The nearby Carcross/Tagish First Nation has worked with the club to develop trails that have made Carcross an internationally recognized riding destination. In 2014, the groups successfully campaigned to win a \$10,000 grant from MEC to develop trails on Montana Mountain as part of the Singletrack to Success program.

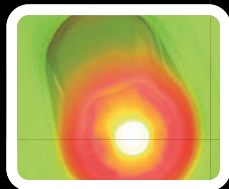
"There's a vibrant bike culture in town," said van der Meer, illustrating a big reason why she now calls the Yukon home. "People move here for the outdoor recreation opportunities we have, and really value that aspect of Whitehorse." 

PROFILE

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Club name | Contagious Mountain Bike Club |
| City | Whitehorse |
| Established | 2007 |
| Members | 200 |
| Website | cmbcyukon.ca |



Photo: Paul Gowdie



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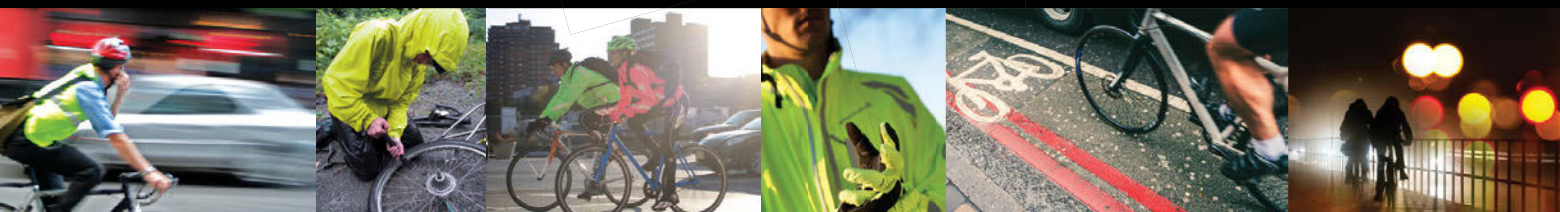
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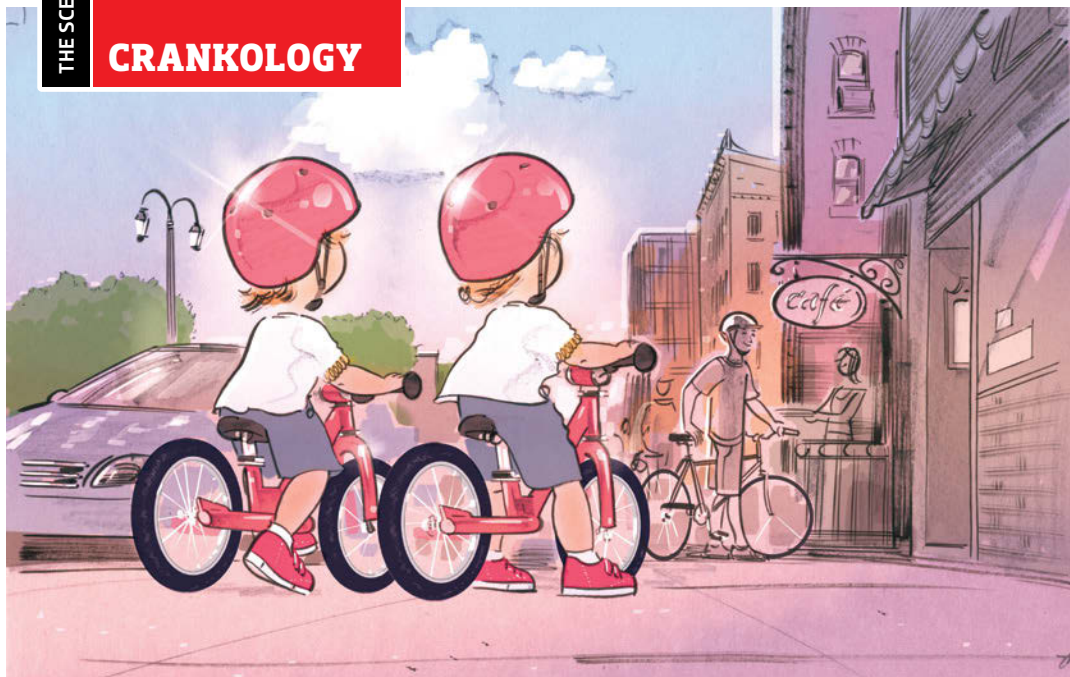
The Dandy Horse Rides Again

Bringing up little riders

by James "Cranky" Ramsay

THE SCENE

CRANKOLOGY



Before my twins, the Crankettes, were born, a family friend who is fond of dispensing platitudinous wisdom said, "The greatest joy of parenthood is seeing the world through the eyes of your children."

This statement surprised me because I thought nothing could be more satisfying than seeing the world through the glassy little eyes of my pet weasel, Reginald, but it turned out I was wrong. It really is wonderful to re-experience a lifetime of learning through one's offspring.

And what could be more exciting than learning to ride a bike? It's the single greatest achievement of my life so far (unless you count playing the harmonica through my nose while eating an apple). I clearly remember the day my dad took the training wheels off my bike. I was very scared to try riding without them, but he assured me he would hold the back of the seat and run behind me to keep me upright.

This approach was fine for about 50 m or so, at which point he let go without telling me. All would have remained fine had I not looked back. I saw that I was untethered, freaked out, fell off the bike and left a huge patch of skin on the road. It hurt like hell and I cried for a long time. I was 34.

Determined not to repeat the mistakes of past generations, I resolved to find a better way to teach my kids to ride a bike. This quest led me to the balance bike, which has no training wheels. In fact, it has no pedals.

The balance bike is the modern expression of the dandy horse, the precursor to the bicycle. The dandy horse was patented by a German inventor in 1818. It's a remarkably simple and effective piece of engineering. To operate it, you simply push yourself along with your feet. When you reach sufficient speed to remain upright, you lift your feet off the ground and coast along. If you feel sufficiently inspired, you can make neighing sounds to enhance the experience.

Now, nearly 200 years after the balance bike made its first appearance on the streets of Europe, it's back. These things are all the rage with pipsqueaks everywhere. In my neighbourhood, they're as plentiful as Vespas in Rome. Because they're whisper quiet (aside from the neighing), they're even more dangerous.

They're also supposed to accelerate the process of learning to ride a bike, so off we went to the local bike shop. We were lucky to find two matching pink ones. When I took out my credit card to pay for them, the shop owner looked at me sternly and said, "What about helmets?"

To be honest, I hadn't considered helmets. I grew up a long time ago, before

child-safety measures of any sort existed. No one wore a bike helmet, prescription medication came in Pez dispensers, seatbelts were viewed as a nuisance, and on Sunday afternoons, we shared a pinch of snuff and a glass of Scotch with our granddad while watching the prize fight. But things have changed a fair bit. For one thing, we don't watch boxing with the children anymore. These days, parents who let their children ride bikes helmetless are seen as failing to provide the necessities of life. And so we shelled out for a couple of helmets (pink, of course), and we were on our way.

I assembled the bikes carefully, placed the helmets atop my children's heads and handed their sunglasses to them, making sure to explain that the arms of the glasses must rest on the outside of the helmet straps. I then lifted each child onto her seat, placed her hands on the grips, and said, "Three, two, one ... Go!" Nothing happened for a few seconds, and then Crankette No. 1 gingerly put one foot forward, followed by the other, and slowly she began to walk with the bike beneath her.

Her sister, not wanting to be outdone, followed right behind. Given the speed involved (which I would guess to be about 1 km/h), the drafting effect was minimal, but it was there nonetheless. Slowly and with great care, the children made their way to the end of the road. Since they hadn't yet mastered the art of steering, I simply picked them up and turned them around, and they proceeded back toward the house.

That first ride was a couple of months ago, and now they're hooked on cycling. Every week, they go a little bit faster and a little bit farther. They've fallen off a lot, but they always get back on. I think they're going to be roadies when they grow up. My wife thinks I'm nuts, but she doesn't see what I see. For one thing, they always want to go for a ride on Sunday mornings. And when I ask them where they want to ride to, the answer is always the same: to the café! ☘

Photo: Nick Crane

ONE OBSESSION

#LIVEYOURS



MARK CAVENDISH
IN THE WIND TUNNEL

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What To Watch When You Watch Races On TV

by **Bart Egnal**

It's Grand Tour time, baby! No, I don't mean that I will be riding the Tour de France this year. (Sorry, Dad, maybe next year.) Instead, I will have a combined nine weeks of couch time to enjoy. If you are someone who loves watching bike racing and spend Christmas break wishing that the Tour of Oman would start already, you don't need to read any further. (Also, you have a problem, and I will probably see you in a 12-step program for cycling addicts.) But if you aren't already planning to catch Clásica Ciclista San Sebastián, Tour de Pologne and Tour of Utah right after the TdF, read on – you are missing a lot.

I confess, when I first started watching bike racing, I felt a whole range of intense emotions – such as boredom and bewilderment. Why would anyone want to watch the peloton ride for three hours just to catch the already doomed breakaway? Why not fast-forward to the last 2 km of a sprint stage or the last few minutes of an uphill finish? Why would guys spend all day in a breakaway and then have the legs to ride tempo the next day? (OK, so some answers I didn't like hearing.)

Like all neophytes, I just needed to find the right mentor. Mine was David Gillam. Dave had welcomed (read: indoctrinated) me to the world of bike racing and already provided valuable guidance (read: directives) – such as how to match my bar tape with my saddle and where to put my sunglasses when not on my face. Dave told me that as I started to race in earnest, I'd come to appreciate watching bike racing more. And gosh darn it – he was right. You never have white bar tape with a black saddle. Oh, and he was also right about appreciating the sport on TV even more.

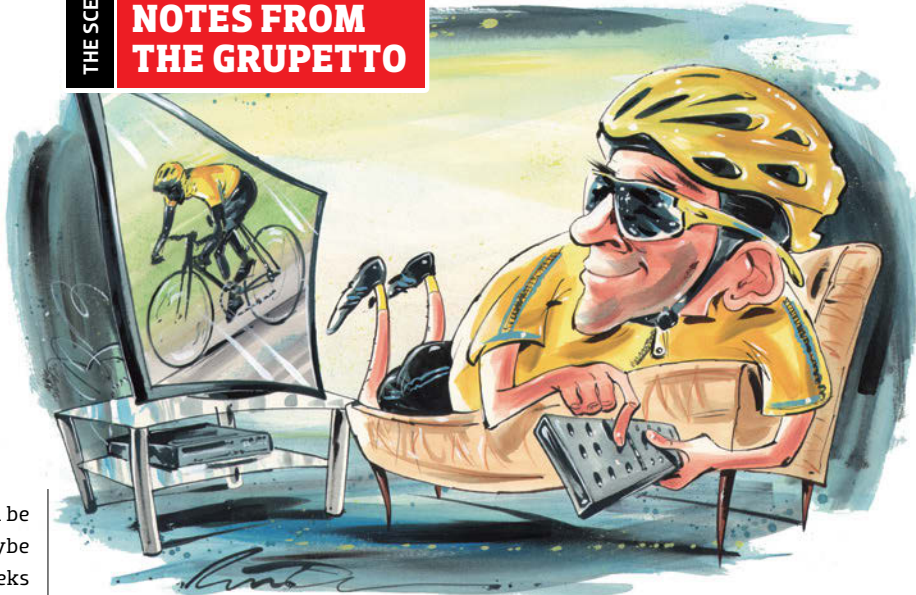
Here are five things you should be paying attention to when you watch a road race on the tube:

Watch the first hour – if you can

When I started racing, I took watching the formation of the breakaway for granted. After learning how brutal it actually is to create or get into a breakaway, my viewing habits have changed. In the WorldTour, getting into a breakaway is a race unto itself. It rarely happens on the first attempt because the stronger teams will only accept the breakaway if it is a limited size and of a certain composition (that is, no GC riders). The teams will chase down riders until the "right" break emerges. This process can result in some

THE SCENE

NOTES FROM THE GRUPETTO



brilliant TV, in which you will see the "no name" riders killing themselves for the privilege of being caught with 10 km to go in the race.

Watch the little battles

From afar, the peloton looks so calm and collected. One could be forgiven for thinking it was a giant club ride. Yet once I started racing, I realized the reality of "sitting in" during a race: you can never relax. Either you are at the front and want to stay there or you are not and want to move up. Watch the way the best riders move up in the bunch – Mark Cavendish is incredible at it. Watch how riders from second-tier teams get pushed off wheels every switchback on a long climb. Watch how teams move their protected riders to the front before climbs, sprints and cobbled sections.

Watch the domestiques who ride tempo

There are two seemingly "boring" sections of racing: the long stretches of time in which the peloton is trying to pull back the break slowly, and the early parts of a climb in which the field shrinks before the actual contenders do battle. Having ridden on the front of the bunch for short stretches, I can tell you the feeling is not a pleasant one – and the riders who do so are worthy of your respect. In Stage 2 of the 2012 Tirreno-Adriatico, Svein Tuft spent a jaw-dropping 200 km on the front of the group. Even Cavendish tweeted his praise of this incredible feat. Rides such as that are far more impressive than some fancy sprinter ramping it up for 15 seconds at the end of the stage.

Watch the individual time trials

Oh wait. Those are boring to watch. Don't waste your time.

Watch what happens in the crosswinds

Nothing is more exciting than a crosswind stage. I've only done one race in which crosswinds were a factor. When you make that 90-degree turn and the draft changes completely, it can be a moment of panic to get into a wheel. On TV, it's really neat to see how the echelons form, how teams prevent riders from joining and how the time gaps can suddenly be race-changing. If you've ever watched the great film *Chasing Legends*, you'll remember the 2009 Tour stage in which crosswinds split the field, leaving "teammates" Lance Armstrong and Alberto Contador in different groups. Great bike racing.

Racing has increased my love of watching the sport – and also the couch time I need to enjoy it fully. Now, if you'll excuse me, the couch beckons: there is the fourth stage of some minor WorldTour event sitting on my PVR. 🍷

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Thibaut Pinot, winner of the 5th stage of the Tour de Suisse, the most difficult climb in the Tour

Calgary's Punchy Prairies

THE SCENE

48 HOURS

The rolling fields will test you
as they have tested the pros

Calgary

I didn't expect much of a challenge on a routine 50-km after-work road ride just southwest of Calgary, despite the obvious warning sign. The route I'd chosen was known affectionately as the Road to Nepal Loop. Still, I couldn't shake my own preconceptions; after all, I live in the mountains and Calgary is decidedly surrounded by the Canadian Prairies.

by Jeff Bartlett



Photo: Jeff Bartlett



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As I pedalled past rolling fields of canola, alfalfa and wheat, I realized that the terrain had a lot in common with the grain elevators that dotted the landscape: both were short, steep and prolific. I bonked just as I crested the hill climb where Tom-Jelte Slagter cemented his KOM jersey win during the final stage of the inaugural Tour of Alberta in 2013. As I hung my head and struggled to the top, faded paint on the road listed the riders who'd climbed the route that day, including veterans Ryder Hesjedal, Cadel Evans and local Kris Dahl.

"The climbs are shorter, but punchier than you'd expect," says Mark Fedoroshyn, parts manager at Bow Cycle. "It's nothing like riding in the mountains, because most of our climbs will be only a couple hundred metres, but they can still be a challenge. I think the biggest climb around here is the road into Cochrane."

The cycling scene in Calgary seems to have grown in stride with the city itself, which has welcomed nearly half a million new residents since 2000 thanks to a huge economy boom centred on the oil and gas industry. Huge investment in city development, key festivals and effective marketing have also made Calgary a thriving tourism destination.

While there has always been more to Calgary than its nicknames – Cowtown and Stampede City – suggest, the city has become a true cosmopolitan hub in the past decade, thanks in part to being one of Canada's fastest-growing cities and home to the second-youngest population. From trendy restaurants and bars along 17th Avenue, which becomes the infamous Red Mile whenever the Calgary Flames make the playoffs, to historic Inglewood, there are plenty of ways to spend time exploring the city. Calgary's urban-village community of Kensington holds the title of the city's most cycle-friendly neighbourhood. It's located just north of the Peace Bridge, a pedestrian/cyclist bridge that connects the Bow River Pathway to downtown Calgary.

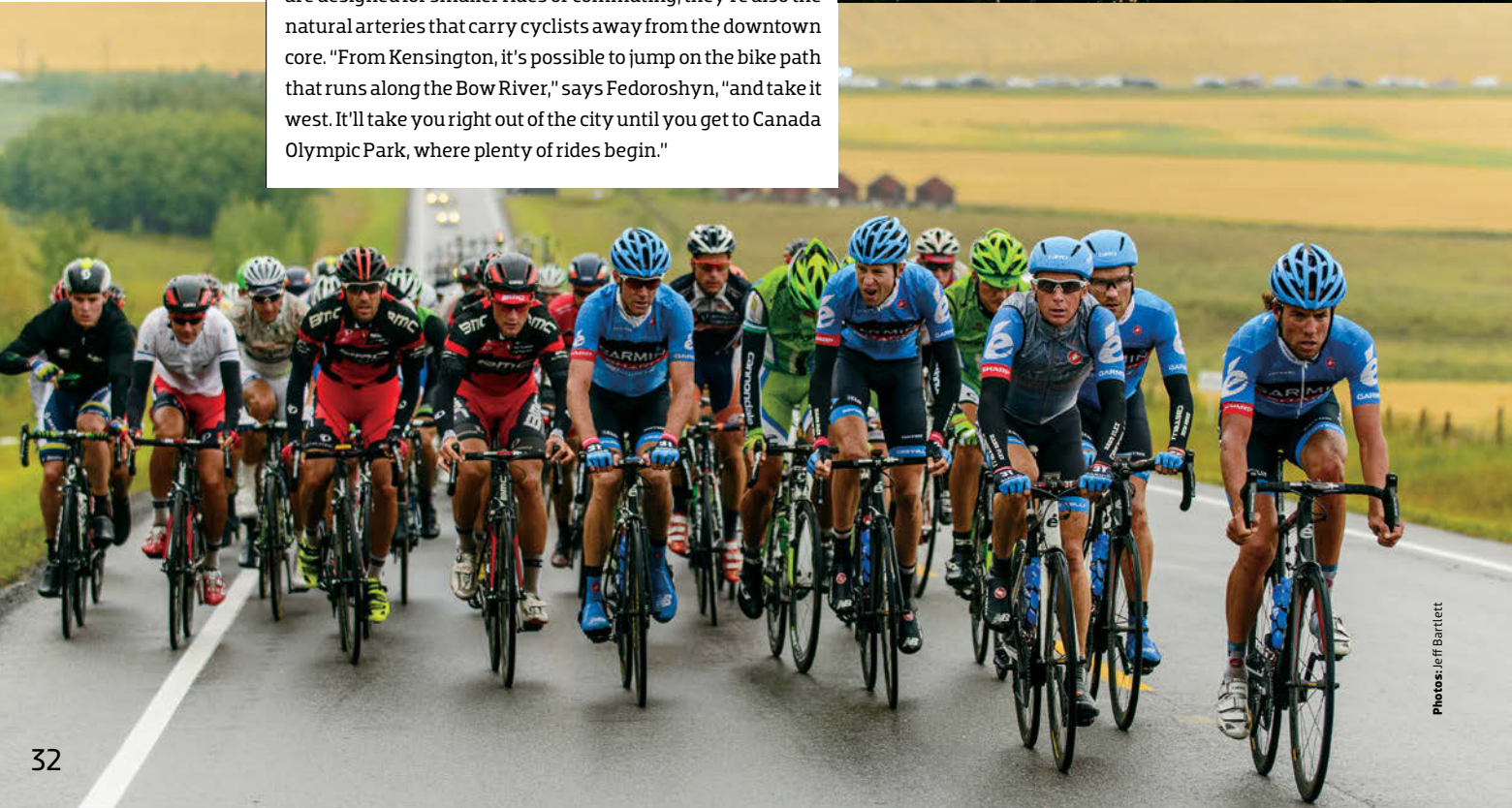
While the majority of Calgary's 700 km of multi-use trails are designed for smaller rides or commuting, they're also the natural arteries that carry cyclists away from the downtown core. "From Kensington, it's possible to jump on the bike path that runs along the Bow River," says Fedoroshyn, "and take it west. It'll take you right out of the city until you get to Canada Olympic Park, where plenty of rides begin."

"I bonked just as I crested the hill climb where Tom-Jelte Slagter cemented his KOM jersey win during final stage of inaugural Tour of Alberta in 2013."



PREVIOUS AND
BELOW
The 2013 Tour of
Alberta course
covered roads
south of Calgary

RIGHT
Calgary's
Peace Bridge



Photos: Jeff Bartlett

Michael Rogers wins stage 16 Tour de France 2014, by 9 seconds after a breakaway on the longest stage of the tour - 237km

Photo: BrakeThrough Media



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Details

How to get there

Both Westjet and Air Canada have daily flights into Calgary from all major Canadian cities, while one-stop connections make it possible to get to Calgary from almost any corner of the Great White North.

The Trans-Canada Highway travels directly through Calgary, too, and the city is more or less halfway between Regina (758 km to the east) and Vancouver (970 km to the west). It's a quick three-hour drive south from Edmonton.

Where to stay

Tourism in Calgary is booming, thanks to its proximity to the Canadian Rockies, so recent investments have included new hotels throughout the city. Options vary depending on location and budget. Check out Hotel Elan (hotelelan.ca) if staying close to the nightlife on 17th Avenue is important, Hotel Arts (hotelarts.ca) for boutique-style rooms downtown or Acclaim Hotel Calgary (acclaimhotel.ca) for easy access to Calgary International Airport.

Where to eat

A booming economy, a major university and a growing tourism industry means Calgary has plenty of trendy restaurants on 17th Avenue S.W., including Model Milk (modelmilk.ca) and Cibo (cibocalgary.com). Pub fare and a large beer selection are best at the neighbouring Craft Beer Market (craftbeermarket.ca) and National Beerhall (ntnl.ca).

To kick-start a morning ride with great coffee and delicious to-go breakfasts, search for the closest Phil and Sebastian Coffee Roasters (philsebastian.com); there are six locations spread throughout the city.

Where to shop

There is no shortage of quality bike shops in Calgary; however, Bow Cycle (bowcycle.com) has cemented itself as the city's leading shop. It's actually one of Canada's largest bike retailers and brings in nearly every major bicycle brand. For high-end road cycling needs, both Calgary Cycle's road shop (calgarycycle.com) and Speed Theory (speedtheory.ca) are excellent options. **C**

Located 36 km northwest of Calgary, the city of Cochrane acts as both a Calgary suburb and a cycling hub. The riding isn't hilly, but it's incredibly scenic, with views that stretch to the distant Canadian Rockies. Like so much of rural Alberta, this area is laid out in a giant grid with range roads running north to south and township roads running east to west; however, higher-density population in this area means many of these roads are paved. The never-ending grid makes it possible to link large rides together simply by exploring more and more roads.

"A lot of our rides head toward Church Ranches, located north of Calgary, which is a little more interesting than riding the range roads," Fedoroshyn says. "These roads just twist around the farms and some of the more expensive homes in Calgary, but the more interesting riding, arguably, is southwest of the city."

Because of southern Alberta's floods in June 2013, the Tour of Alberta's queen stage over Highwood Pass had to be rerouted to the rough triangle just southwest of Calgary that connects the city to Okotoks and Bragg Creek. While the Road to Nepal wouldn't figure into the general classification standing, it did provide the tour's most exciting breakaway when Canadian national team rider Antoine Duchesne escaped early in the stage alongside pro-peloton veterans Evans, Simon Geschke, Benjamin Day, and Slagter. Their performance that day is what led me to attempt the ride on my own, so I ventured out just a few days later and discovered that despite the lack of mountains, prairie hills are short, but not anything but sweet. Before I knew it, I was struggling back toward Alberta Highway 22X, back to downtown Calgary and my hotel. It sat just a few blocks from the Calgary Tower, where Peter Sagan nabbed his third-stage win in a bunch sprint down Centre Street.

The next day, I prepared myself for an even bigger challenge. I retraced my route toward the Road to Nepal, but carried on past the turnoff and on to Bragg Creek. From there, I set out to explore Kananaskis Country, a vast park system managed by the provincial government, along the Elbow Falls Trail. The pavement never strays far from the edge of the Elbow River and the climbs gradually grew in size as I left the foothills and entered the front ranges of the Canadian Rockies. After reaching Elbow Falls, I turned around and pointed my bike back toward the city. It was downhill from the mountains back to the prairie, but I finally knew better than to expect an easy ride back to Calgary.

GET OUT THERE



PHOTO: SEVERSON // RIDER: LOPES



HIGH ROLLER II

"Flyin' Brian" Lopes is a mountain bike racing legend with 9 Norba titles, 26 UCI World Cup wins, 6 Overall World Cup titles and 4 UCI World Championships. An athlete who embodies the idea of **Get Out There**, he's been racing and winning since 1989. Named the best *All-around world class cycling athlete by USA Today*, Brian races Downhill, Dual Slalom, 4X, Enduro, XC, Cyclocross and Road! As an MTB and BMX Hall of Fame inductee, Brian's mastery of mountain biking is indisputable. **Maxxis is proud to sponsor Flyin' Brian as he continues to forge his legacy into the future. Get Out There!**

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A Purpose Ridden

written by **Ryan Correy**

published by **Rocky Mountain Books**

reviewed by **Dan Dakin**

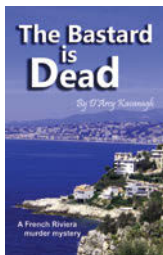
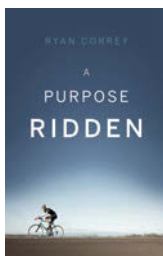
It's a story of family tragedy, of friends made and friendships wasted, of determination beyond all odds and of success and failure. But most of all, *A Purpose Ridden*, is a story about bicycles, and how one man has made it his life's work to change the world one pedal stroke at a time.

A talented youth hockey player with Olympic aspirations, Ryan Correy was 13 years old when his dad took him on a 3,400-km bicycle trip from his hometown of Calgary to visit family in Ontario. His father called it "manhood training." What it turned out to be was life-changing.

Nine years later, Correy had transformed himself from hockey prospect to extreme athlete. He was more than 20,000 km into a ride spanning the Pan American Highway from Alaska to Argentina. When Correy and his crew chief crossed into Peru, some questionable police officers tried to shake them down for money. Tired of it happening over and over, the two ran. It was just another day on the job.

Correy kept journals of his long-distance exploits throughout the years. The result is a diary-style memoir of some mind-blowing feats. The author doesn't shy away from self-examination in *A Purpose Ridden*, freely and openly talking about sensitive issues, such as his suicidal thoughts, the pressure put on him by a successful, business-oriented family and his early failures in trying to use his cycling to raise money for charity.

The 479-page book is hard to put down. Correy's honest writing style caused some tension within his family, and one can understand why. This is a book as much about family dynamics as it is about cycling. Fortunately, the two storylines weave together seamlessly to create a must-read book for anyone.



The treatment of cycling is accurate in this book, but I wouldn't say it's particularly "insider." The insights aren't on par with those in Tim Kabbé's *The Rider*, for example. But, as a backdrop for a mystery, Kavanagh's work gets the sport right. There's no UCI, though. In the book, it's the World Professional Cycling Federation that runs pro cycling. The detective work I enjoyed while reading was trying to situate the year in which the action is set. Clues include the newness of Grand Prix Cycliste de Québec and de Montréal, which are mentioned. That puts things around 2010, or possibly 2011 for the second edition of the Quebec WorldTour events. Burke, at one point, finds himself in a bike shop and learns about an electronic groupset, which is a novelty. Shimano's Di2 came out in 2009 to 2010.

Pick up *The Bastard is Dead*. You'll enjoy the mystery and a work of fiction that features your favourite sport.

The Urban Cycling Survival Guide

written by **Yvonne Bambrick**

published by **ECW Press**

reviewed by **Matthew Pioro**

Im sure you've been asked this question by a non-cycling friend: "Hey, you bike. I was thinking of biking to work: what should I do?" That friend might not know that that question, depending on his or her knowledge of the bike, can require a book-length answer. Yvonne Bambrick has written the book that can provide that answer.

The Urban Cycling Survival Guide is for the commuter. It has a rundown of the equipment you need and strategies for making your way through a city. I was particularly interested on how Bambrick would treat the discussion on helmets. Whenever I've seen her riding around Toronto, it's without a lid. But unlike those riders who avoid helmets out of vanity or simple negligence, Bambrick has put thought into what the helmet means. She's on record speaking out against mandatory helmet laws, saying they deter people from riding and the pursuit of such laws takes away from actually making streets safer for cyclists. In her book, she touches on these points, but approaches the politics and safety elements in a balanced way.

I also like her on-road strategies, especially her discussion of the pedestrian-style left turn. It can be a practical way of getting through a busy intersection. But because it involves the crosswalk, it puts you into territory not meant for the bike. I always defer to others when I'm on a crosswalk. Bambrick's instructions are spot on: "Yield to oncoming traffic, stay out of the way of pedestrians trying to cross, watch for right-turning vehicles and wait for the green light to ride your bike through the intersection in the new direction of travel."

The Urban Cycling Survival Guide is a great primer for riding in the city. Even riders who are comfortable navigating traffic could learn something from a writer who's thought about the nuances of city cycling. **G**

The Bastard is Dead

written by **D'Arcy Kavanagh**

reviewed by **Matthew Pioro**

THE SCENE

BOOKS
& DVDS

D'Arcy Kavanagh's book arrived at the right time of year. It's a murder mystery, which is just the thing for summer reading, on the beach or at the cottage. Cycling features prominently in this tale of murder most foul. The main character, Paul Burke, is a Montrealer living in France. He's also an ex-pro roadie. He was minor man in the pro peloton and later lost his television gig commenting on races after he launched a barrage of cuss words on air. He was drunk at the time, too.

The reader meets Burke as the character drinks a pastis in a café. He's not washed up, but he doesn't exactly have a lot going on. He blogs a bit about cycling for a French media outlet, and drinks. But a mysterious death of a directeur sportif during the Tour de France sets things in motion for Burke.

Burke is a good central character. I like how he's an everyman, not a super-detective like Sherlock Holmes. Burke finds himself reporting on the death, and then another one happens to a former teammate of Burke's. And then there's another death, this time a powerful businessman is the victim. Burke gets wrapped up in that, too. These murders, in a way, are good for the former pro. He's forced to work on his journalistic chops. And he starts riding more.

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Sarah Caylor's

Moroccan Grilled Chicken Buddha Bowl with Maple Tahini Dressing

by Tracey Green




An epic ride for hours and hours, a meetup with friends and a bonfire under the stars – these are parts of chef Sarah Caylor's perfect day. "If I could live like that forever, it would be amazing. I did the Tour Divide last summer and it was like that every day," she said of the epic ride.

Growing up as a competitive equestrian, Caylor made the switch to cycling when friends asked her to take part in a 24-hour mountain bike race in 2000. After that, she was hooked.

Caylor feels that the longer the ride on her 29er singlespeed, the better. She's ridden 24-hour races solo. Ontario Cup races also keep her season action-packed. In 2014, she undertook her biggest challenge: the 4,418-km Tour Divide from Banff, Alta., to Antelope Wells, N.M., on the U.S. border with Mexico. Her ride took 22 days. She battled hypothermia, twice. And, yes, she wants to do it again in 2016.

While Caylor has worked as a chef for more than 25 years and is a certified sommelier, she didn't start out in the food industry. "I thought I was going to be an international lawyer, and then I said, 'No. Forget that. I want to be a chef.'" She was inspired by her mom and aunt, who are great cooks and entertainers in the kitchen. Today, Caylor continues to study her craft: she is back at school to add professional cheesemaker to her credentials.

This hard-core, endurance rider's favourite recovery food after a tough training day is her Moroccan grilled chicken Buddha bowl with maple tahini dressing. Its complex carbohydrates, anti-inflammatory spices and good fats make this a great, post-effort dinner. Caylor suggest pairing the meal with a white wine, such as Sancerre, a red (Gamay, for example) or a dry, hoppy IPA. 

Serves 4

Step 1

Moroccan Spice Blend

Ingredients

- 2 tsp each of** nutmeg, coriander, cumin, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon and sea salt
- 1 tsp each of** smoked paprika, garlic, black pepper, cayenne, cardamom, allspice and cloves

Directions

Mix all ingredients and store in an airtight container. Makes approximately ½ cup of Moroccan spice blend.

Step 2

The Chicken, Quinoa and Sweet Potato

Ingredients

- 4** boneless, skinless, all-natural chicken breasts
- 4 tsp** Moroccan spice blend
- 2 tbsp** lemon juice
- 3 tbsp** olive oil
- ¾ cups** quinoa
- 2** sweet potatoes, cubed
- salt
- pepper
- rosemary

Directions

- 1.** In a small bowl, mix the spice blend, lemon juice and 2 tbsp olive oil.

- 2.** Place the mix in a large Ziploc bag with the chicken breasts, massage well and marinate for two hours.
- 3.** Mix the large sweet potato cubes with 1 tbsp of oil, salt, pepper and rosemary. Roast at 400 F for 20 minutes.
- 4.** Cook the quinoa.
- 5.** After the chicken has marinated, place on a grill at medium-high heat. Grill the chicken for 10 to 12 minutes, turning once, until the breasts are no longer pink inside. Let the chicken rest under foil while finishing up the other steps.

Step 3

Maple Tahini Dressing

Ingredients

- ¼ cup** tahini
- 1 tbsp** fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup** water
- 2 tbsp** real maple syrup
- ½ tsp** cinnamon
- sea salt
- pepper, freshly ground

Directions

Blend tahini, lemon juice, water, maple syrup and cinnamon until very smooth and creamy. Add sea salt and pepper to taste.

Step 4

Building the Bowl

Ingredients

- 4 cups** baby spinach
- 4 cups** baby arugula
- 4 cups** baby kale
- 4 tbsp** pumpkin seeds
- 2 tbsp** chia seeds
- 2 tbsp** raw almonds or walnuts
- 1** avocado, cubed
- ½** cucumber, sliced
- 1** tomato, sliced into wedges
- 4 tbsp** dried cherries or cranberries
- ½ cup** carrot shavings
- 4 tbsp** goat feta, crumbled
- 4 tbsp** fresh cilantro

Directions

- 1.** Divide the spinach, arugula and kale into four bowls.
- 2.** Add the quinoa and potato cubes from Step 2.
- 3.** Divide the rest of the ingredients among the bowls.
- 4.** Slice the chicken from Step 2 and add.
- 5.** Drizzle 1 to 2 tbsp of dressing (Step 3) over the contents of each bowl.

Nutritional Information

For one serving

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Calories | 766 |
| Carbs | 84 g |
| Saturated Fat | 9 g |
| Fibre | 19 g |
| Protein | 22 g |



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LET'S RIDE!

Nut Butters to Go Nuts For

Move beyond the peanut

by **Matthew Kadey**

Cyclists have had a long love affair with peanut butter. Armed with a couple slices of bread or just a spoon, this sticky companion to jelly provides a convenient source of satisfying calories. But if you're jonesing for a different spread to upgrade your PB&J, you're in luck. The range of nut and seed butters on the market has never been greater, each one offering its own nutritional perks, not to mention flavour nuances. Start with these spreads, which are worthy of a good slather.

Almond Butter

Rich-tasting almond butter verges on addicting and is a better source of cholesterol-lowering monounsaturated fat than peanut butter. Almond butter also provides about 20 per cent more calcium to help build bones of steel. Once opened, almond and other nut butters should be stored in the refrigerator to preserve freshness.

Beyond toast Whisk together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra virgin olive oil or camelina oil, two tablespoons unsalted almond butter, two teaspoons honey, juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, one minced garlic clove and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt. Say hello to your new favourite salad dressing.

Coconut Butter

Here's how to make your diet taste more like a tropical vacation. This Paleo-worthy spread is made by pureeing coconut flesh into a spreadable paste. This is not to be confused with coconut oil, which is produced by pressing the oil from the flesh. Nutritional highlights of coconut butter include more dietary fibre than other nut spreads and lauric acid, a fat with antibacterial powers. Recent research has failed to link the saturated fat in coconut with coronary woes. If the butter becomes too hard to spread, set the jar in a bowl of hot water for a few minutes and then mix the butter up.

Beyond toast Stir a heaping spoonful into your simmering oatmeal. Also, roast chunks of sweet potato until crispy and then toss with a tablespoon or two of coconut butter.

Cashew Butter

This naturally sweet, velvety, not-too-oily spread will have you clamouring for a CB&J mid-ride sandwich. Cashew butter is laced with heart-healthy monounsaturated fat and copper, a mineral necessary for proper iron metabolism as well as immune system and bone health.

THE SCENE

NUTRITION



What Lies Between

This modern riff on PB&J will appease all generations in a household, not to mention leaving your ride mates hankering for a bite.

Ingredients

3 tbsp chia seeds
1½ cups raspberries
3 tbsp honey
1 cup nut or seed butter of choice
2 tbsp cocoa powder
1 tbsp vanilla extract
½ tbsp cinnamon


Directions

1. In a bowl, mix together chia seeds and 1 cup water. Let sit for about 45 minutes to form a gel, stirring occasionally to prevent clumping.
2. In a blender or food processor, pulse together chia gel with raspberries and 2 tablespoons honey. Chill overnight.
3. Stir together nut butter, cocoa powder, remaining honey, vanilla extract and cinnamon.
4. Spread desired amount of chocolate nut butter and raspberry chia jam between two slices of toasted bread.

Beyond toast Blend together $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsalted cashew butter, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup evaporated milk, two tablespoons maple syrup, one teaspoon vanilla extract and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg in a blender until smooth. (Add more liquid if needed.) Use as a topping for pancakes, waffles or oatmeal.

Sunflower Seed Butter

This butter comes from the sun-worshipping yellow plant that is a fixture of Tour de France coverage. You don't have to have a nut allergy to reach for this creamy spread that tastes very reminiscent of, well, sunflower seeds without the pesky shells. Sunflower butter is a top-notch source of the antioxidant vitamin E as well as magnesium, which has been shown to help improve blood sugar numbers.

Beyond toast In a food processor, whirl together $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups pitted dates, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flax powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cocoa powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sunflower seed butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon, and the zest and juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ orange. Roll into balls for an energizing pre-ride nibble. 

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Commuter Workouts

Use the ride to work or school to become a stronger cyclist

by Stephen Cheung

With busy life and work schedules, restricted training and riding time is a fact of life for most cyclists. If we are lucky, we can fit in a long ride or group ride on the weekends. But for the workweek, what are some options?

One would be getting up very early for a ride before getting changed and hitting the commute for work. If you live in the city, you'll find less traffic at this time, but, for much year, these rides will be in the dark. Another possibility is the trainer. While it is great for focused workouts, here in Canada we see enough of that machine during the long winters, so the fun factor becomes less than zero.

The best option may be to use your commute both for training

and for getting to work, especially if it is otherwise wasted time stuck in traffic listening to mindless radio. Even more so if it is the difference between some bike time and none at all.

Your type of commute might dictate what you can get training-wise. If you live a fair distance from work, the ride can be a way to add substantial volume. I was 27 km away from campus during my undergraduate career, and it meant two hours daily of endurance riding that I otherwise would have had no time at all for.

If you live close to work, try to extend your ride. A 30-minute, one-way commute is probably the minimum for getting in any constructive training.



Find more training advice from Brock University's Stephen Cheung:

- Avoiding the pitfalls of over over training
- Preparing for a multi-day cycling event
- Recovering from injury


Commuting Workouts

Consider these workouts that might fit into a 30-minute commute

Stomps If you live in an urban area, it is crazy and dangerous to sprint through traffic lights or stop signs. Instead, mix in five to six efforts by leaving an intersection from a low speed or complete stop in a big gear. Stay seated and stomp hard for 10 to 20 pedal strokes. Work on tightening your core and keeping your body stable while driving with your legs. Stomps are great for building strength on the bike. Keep your head up and eyes open.

High-intensity intervals If you live in a hilly area, use the hills as interval sites. Rather than get hung up on perfectly timed intervals and recovery, just go as hard as possible up the hills and spin very easily elsewhere. My nine years living in Halifax with a young family and no non-commuting time to ride, I used these efforts exclusively as my training. Scientific research initiated in the mid-2000s at McMaster University demonstrates that such a low-volume, maximal-intensity style of training can improve fitness as effectively as a high volume of endurance rides.

Sprinting If you live in a rural area with minimal traffic or traffic lights, you can do specific sprint training. Do five to six sprints of 100–150 m from a slow speed in the small chainring and about the middle of the cassette, shifting up two cogs over the sprint. The aim is to work on building explosive leg speed rather than pure force. Stand up during the whole sprint and keep good sprinting form. This means throwing the bike side to side in a strong but co-ordinated manner.

When commuting, focus on getting the maximum quality from minimal time, and get your endurance fix on other rides. But above all, keep your head up, eyes open and never sacrifice safety in traffic. 

"When commuting, focus on getting the maximum quality from minimal time"

TRAINING

TRAINING TIPS

Photo: Ryan Creary / AlCanadaPhotos.com



OFF THE FRONT

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TRAINING

TECHNIQUE



Head to our website for more technique and training advice from Andrew Randell and Steve Neal of the Cycling Gym.

by **Andrew Randell and Steve Neal**

When you roll down some singletrack on your mountain bike, all kinds of obstacles lie in your path. Roots, trees, rocks and rutted trails are all conspiring to knock you off your bike. The line you take on the trail is key to staying clear of these obstacles and having a smooth ride.

If you tend to ride on the worn part of the trail, change that practice. The worn part of the trail might feel like the easiest, most obvious line to take, but in most cases it is not the best one. For instance, when you brake on a descent or into a corner, one of the problems you'll often face is the jarring caused by the braking bumps that have been laid down by all the riders passing through the trail. A great technique to avoid them is to ride slightly to the outside of the trail, where there is less wear and the surface offers a smoother ride.

Hitting the outside of the trail will also set you up nicely for an upcoming corner. On a mountain bike, you want to take your corners outside to outside. This technique is in contrast with riding on the road, where the approach is outside, inside, outside. When you encounter a corner on the trail, start on the outside of the corner, stay wide past the apex, and then drop into the corner before exiting to the outside to maintain your speed.

Using the outside of the trail will do a few things. First, it will create a greater turning radius to help get your bike around a corner, especially on a steep switchback climb. From the outside, you will have a better view of the trail so that you can see what is coming and set up for the next obstacle or corner. Think of weaving through a series of trees and needing to see around them quickly to decide which line you will continue to ride. The wider you go, the more you'll be able to see. Finally, the inside of the trail is often where you will find the roots and rocks that will give you a puncture or the tree leaning in that will throw you for a loop when you hit it with your shoulder.

When choosing where to ride while mountain biking, keep your eyes open for the smoother, wider line that often presents itself on the outside of the trail. The outside will be safer and faster, and will help you ride better. 🚴



Photo: Ryan Creary / AllCanadaPhotos.com



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Another way to keep your bike from making noises is to keep the drivetrain clean. Check out Barry Fraser's tips for getting your chain, gears and rear derailleur grime free.

Did You Hear That?

What your bike is trying to tell you when it makes noise

by **Barry Fraser**

To be one with your bike, you must learn to speak its language. A bike can emit several creaks, grinds and snaps to tell you when and where you need to pay more attention to it.

A creak or snap, typically heard when climbing or sprinting, is usually caused by a vital component working loose or getting dirty. It can, in some cases, be a sign of imminent failure as a cracked frame, handlebar or seat-post can create a similar sound to that of a dirty bottom bracket. Because of these similarities, it is very important to investigate the source of the noise to ensure your ride is safe and sound.

Here are a few common problem areas and steps to silence these situations.

Why do my brakes squeal?

The most cringe-worthy sound a bike can make is squealing brakes. Both rim and disc brakes can scream if they are not set up correctly, or are worn or contaminated. Rim brake pads need to be toed in, so that the front of each pad comes in contact with the rim first. Toeing in the pads reduces the vibration that causes the sound. Centring the calipers will help as well; ensure that when you squeeze your brake lever, the pads hit the rim simultaneously. Carbon rims are light and fast, but using the wrong pad compound on carbon can drown out even the loudest trash talkers on your ride. Carbon rims are also less than ideal in wet, or even humid, conditions. Stick with the pads your rim manufacturer recommends. I like to use the softer compounds for wet conditions. They wear faster, but offer much

more responsive and quieter braking through a variety of conditions.

Disc brakes can get noisy with any contamination from chain oil overspray, greasy mud or even fingerprints on the disc. Keep your discs clean with a specific cleaner designed to dry without residue. Using an organic-based pad (as opposed to a metal base) and centring the caliper on the rotor can reduce the squeal significantly.

Why does my bottom bracket creak?

The bottom bracket is a notorious noisemaker. It is prone to issues because of the strong forces that act upon it. It's also very susceptible to water and dirt contamination. Several things can result in a creaky bottom bracket: a loose crank, worn, damaged or dirty bearings, and loose or dirty bearing cups.

The best way to fix a noisy BB is with an overhaul. Remove, inspect, clean, grease and reinstall the cranks and bracket to eliminate the noise. When the bracket is out of the frame, check the bearings for wear. If you rotate the bearing and you feel any pitting or grit, then replace them as they are generally a low-cost, but very important component.

Pedals also face strong forces and a lot of grime. Check them for bearing play and smoothness as well. A drop of dry lube on the retention springs will keep them in good shape.

Why is my handlebar making noise?

If you hear a sharp, high-pitched popping sound from your cockpit when climbing or sprinting, it is

something that should be tended to as soon as possible as it could be a sign of a loose bolt. Usually a quick fix is to do a quick torque check on all of the bolts on your stem. If you do find a loose bolt, a good practice is to remove it completely, inspect it for damaged threads and if it checks out, clean and grease it before reinstalling.

Also check for headset bearing play. Cup your hand around the top of the headset with one hand and hold the front brake tight with the other. Push the bike straight forward, then pull it back and feel for any movement between the fixed cup (or frame with integrated systems) and the top bearing cap. Play causes the seals to open up, letting dirt and water in. If there is excessive play, an overhaul may be required to remove dirt and clean all the contact surfaces.

Why are my gears skipping?

One of the most common recurring mechanical issues is poor gear alignment. A combination of cable stretch, dirt, wear and delicate components can cause lots of grief. A bent derailleur hanger is a common issue causing the gears to skip in the high and low end of the range and needs an alignment gauge to fix. A stiff chain link may not affect your shifting, but will cause an audible click-clack as it passes through the derailleur. You'll see the bad link because it won't straighten out like the rest between the chainring and cogs.

If you have to shift twice to move up one cog, or when you shift once, you get nothing but a bunch of noise, then your cable tension is too low. If you shift to a smaller cog and nothing happens, then your cables or housing is most likely worn and dirty and should be replaced.

In more extreme cases, your cassette can come loose. Try to wiggle your cassette cogs side to side: if there is play between the individual cogs, remove the wheel, inspect the lockring for damage and tighten. If the cogs seem snug, but the whole cassette moves side to side, you could have a faulty freehub body or bearing. If so, the components need to be replaced.

There are a number of other hard-to-source sounds that could be disrupting your ride. If these tips don't provide the solution you require, then seek out the assistance of a pro. A quiet bike is a happy bike. **G**



A group of cyclists is riding on a paved road that curves through a dense, green forest. The cyclists are wearing athletic gear, including helmets, jerseys, and shorts. The lead cyclist is in the foreground, wearing a black jersey and shorts, with a blue and white logo on the sleeve. The road is made of asphalt and is surrounded by tall trees and lush greenery. The text "Grab life by the handlebars." is overlaid on the left side of the image in a white, sans-serif font. In the bottom right corner, there is a dark red banner with white text listing two routes: "Routes 1/1A The Cottage Country 80 and 100" and "Routes 2/2A Lakes, Rivers and Cafes 45 and 60".

Grab life by
the handlebars.

Routes 1/1A **The Cottage Country 80 and 100**
Routes 2/2A **Lakes, Rivers and Cafes 45 and 60**

Routes 3/3A **Hills, Views & Pastries** 65 and 80

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A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a red cycling jersey. The jersey features a white logo on the right chest and the word "system" in white lettering across the chest. The background is a solid, vibrant red.

FEATURE

Pro Riders on SUFFERING

It's too common to talk about suffering on the bike. But four Canadian pros – **Svein Tuft, Ryder Hesjedal, Lex Albrecht and Catharine Pendrel** – explore what it really means

by Paul Gains



Svein Tuft remembers the crash well. It was during the second stage of the this year's Tour de Romandie. He'd stuffed a half a dozen bottles down the front of his jersey to deliver them to his teammates near the front of the peloton. As he was moving up, the bunch suddenly veered left, the space in front of him vanished and he crashed hard into a guardrail.

"I had nowhere to go," the Orica-GreenEdge pro from Langley, B.C., remembers. "I came up against the curb and I landed on my chest on the guard rail at about 50 km/h. And so I got these fractures and everything, but the big scare was a contusion over the heart, which can lead to a whack of other problems."

"Looking back, I really think the bottles saved me from a lot of the impact because I slid along the top of the guard rail and then hit a pole that was sticking up six to 10 inches. That's what impacted my chest."

Seconds passed as he lay on the tarmac. Doctors would later confirm fractures in his wrist and bruising of his sternum that made breathing difficult. Despite the pain, Tuft got back on his bike and finished the stage. "As I was lying there on the ground," he recalls, "my head was saying, 'My year's gone. It's pretty bad. But you need to try and finish because maybe you haven't broken



anything and it's just pain and you would be really upset if you didn't finish and suffered through the pain a bit.' I quickly realized that wasn't the case. I was pretty banged up and probably the last 10 km were some of the worst on a bike that I have ever experienced."

Professional cyclists are surely some of the toughest athletes on the




planet enduring crashes, broken bones, concussions and road rash to complete their tasks on behalf of their teammates. Duty rules – just get the job done. Pain and suffering are part of the job, and the sport is rife with similar tales of bravery.

Tuft considers himself fortunate. Although he has crashed many times in a career that has seen

TOP
Tony Martin, Tony Gallopin and Peter Sagan suffering after a Stage 1 crash during the 2013 Tour de France

RIGHT
Mark Cavendish after his Stage 1 crash at the 2014 Tour de France, a crash that took him out of the race



 Mark Cavendish  Dislocated shoulder  Tour de France 2014



Egg Bleakrey

Photo: Graham Watson




 Svein Tuft  Wrist fractures, bruised sternum  Tour de Romandie 2015

Photo: Cass



"I was pretty banged up and probably the last 10 km were some of the worst on a bike that I have ever experienced."

OPPOSITE
Svein Tuft after
his crash during
Stage 2 of the Tour
de Romandie

TOP LEFT
Lex Albrecht
pushes through
after her crash at
the 2014 UCI road
world champion-
ships in Ponfer-
rada, Spain

TOP RIGHT
Ryder Hesjedal
holds his head
after narrowly
protecting his lead
and the pink jersey
at the 2012 Giro
d'Italia

him ride in both the Tour de France and Giro d'Italia. He hadn't broken a bone – until Romandie. Other pros have suffered crashes during significant races that have forced them to ride – against better judgment as well as medical advice. "I broke a rib on the first stage of the 2013 Tour de France," says Ryder Hesjedal, the 2012 Giro champion. "It was a long three weeks to Paris but I was proud to finish and be part of a very successful Tour for the team."

"Sure, there are moments in racing and training when you think, 'Is it really worth it to keep going? Am I doing more harm than good?' This sport is so difficult but those are the moments, the moments when you push through, that define you as an athlete. To push through and go beyond what you think is possible is what sport is all about. You draw on many things to keep going: loved ones, fans and of course your team. Everyone supports us and you want to achieve for them."

What is it about professional cyclists that makes them so willing to suffer through injury and compete even though they are not at 100 per cent? Other sportsmen, fearing an escalation of an injury, will pull out of a competition when they feel the slightest twinge. Cyclists seem hard-wired to accept pain. And, it's not just the pain brought on by crashes either. There are times in a race when a decision has to be made to go for it or give in to the exhaustion and fatigue.

Lex Albrecht, from Montreal, currently rides for the Optum presented by Kelly Benefit Strategies women's pro team. Apart from several concussions – one leading to a blackout – and severe crashes at the 2013 UCI world championships, she retains her enthusiasm for racing despite

pain and fatigue. It was during the final stage of the 2011 Redlands Bicycle Classic in California that she learned a valuable lesson about being tough.

"The final stage is notorious for being the hardest event of the five-day race," Albrecht explains. "The leaders were really putting the pressure on the peloton. Riders were getting shelled every lap. But on this particular one, as we neared the summit of the queen of the mountains line, they were going so hard that it was hang on or game over."

"I remember digging very deep to make that selection. I knew that I'd gone super-hard before during my winter interval training, and I pretended that this was just another interval. There must have been six of us who made it, and our break stuck until the end. It was also a great lesson to have learned that sometimes you just have to push hard a few more seconds to get what you've been working for."

Albrecht, like many of her peers, believes professional cyclists develop this hard edge over progressive seasons and by developing coping skills to deal with pain and suffering. "By finding coping mechanisms, we can actually put our bodies in a place of deeper suffering," she hypothesizes. "But, it feels different than it would have ever felt before, because we learn how to ignore or circumvent those pain signals. We're hurting more, but we're feeling it in a different way. Does that make sense?" She admits to setting short-term goals mid-race, particularly when the going gets tough: hang in for 20 minutes, one more attack, go to the front, for example.




During the elite women's cross country race at the 2014 UCI mountain bike world championships in Hafjell, Norway,




Hesjedal racing Stage 19 of the 2013 Tour de France, as he continued to race with a broken rib

OPPOSITE
Catharine Pendrel
nears the finish of
the 2014 UCI moun-
tain bike world
championships in
Hafjell, Norway

Photo: Casey B. Gibson

 Ryder Hesjedal  Broken rib  Tour de France 2013

A full-page photograph of Catharine Pendrel, a Canadian mountain biker, in action during the Hafjell UCI MTB World Championships 2014. She is wearing a blue and white racing jersey with a Canadian maple leaf, a blue helmet, and sunglasses. She is riding a full-suspension mountain bike on a dirt trail. In the background, there are spectators and banners for 'SCOTT' and 'INNOVATION TECHNOLOGY DESIGN'.

"By finding coping mechanisms, we can actually put our bodies in a place of deeper suffering."

 Catharine Pendrel  Puncture  Hafjell UCI MTB World Championships 2014

Catharine Pendrel had earned herself a comfortable lead when she experienced a slow leak in her rear tire. A mechanic replaced the wheel. But she saw her advantage whittled down to 20 seconds and was forced to push harder than ever for the victory and the second rainbow jersey of her career.

"It's excruciating," remembers the rider based in Kamloops, B.C. "It's intensely painful, and the whole time you are just pushing and trying not to think about how your body feels. You don't have an option. If you are going to come out on top, you just have to keep pushing. It was funny because I got interviewed immediately afterwards and I felt really dizzy and thought I was going to fall over. And, I was like, 'Oh, I wonder if it is obvious to other people that I am struggling to stand up now!'"

"I think if you are really engaged in the race, not so much in how your body is feeling, but in the race itself, then you can kind of block out some of the suffering. It's a matter of where

your focus is. If you are thinking about how bad your body feels, then the race probably isn't going to go that well. But, if you think more about technique, what to do to get every ounce out of your pedal stroke, at least for me, that is more successful."


Pendrel has broken her collarbone twice and has hit the dirt many times during competitions and in training. She admits that there is a period of adjustment in which riders must overcome any hesitation to take risks during competition, but this time varies from rider to rider. "Yes, it is true that when you have a crash and you get hurt that fear element is there," she reveals, "and it takes time to get over that and to get back to the rider you were when you didn't think so much about that."

"There is a difference between a crash and a crash that actually hurts. In racing, I haven't had any bad crashes that put me out of a race. Definitely, sometimes you have a crash that shakes you a little bit.

When you crash in a race, it's hard to get your rhythm back. You have to take a deep breath and get going again."

For Svein Tuft, it's the commitment to the team that's the overriding factor. There are times, he says, when he has completed his task for a stage and is totally spent. But there is still the time limit to consider. "Some days you might have 30 km to go, in some cases, 50 km, and all you're thinking about is ... 'You are totally screwed,'" he reveals. "I have had some of my worst days when you are basically cross-eyed and bonking and you are struggling to get through, but the thing that is spurring you on is you need to be there again. You are not just 'you' anymore like in a triathlon or a different individual event where you're focused on yourself."

"When you are part of a team and part of a group of people, then it's totally different. You don't quit. Even if the next day, all you can do is get some bottles to the team with 50 km to go, it's something that you can contribute. That's how guys see it. You can still have a great job if you take that on and are fully committed."

Dealing with pain and suffering is something cyclists must learn to manage. The pros just seem to have had more time to acclimatize themselves to this notion so that it's second nature. After all, it's their job. But amateurs, who face their own daunting challenges – that first 160 km gran fondo or a hilly club ride that shells you out the back – can learn a thing or two from those who make a living through their pain. 

TAKING ON PARIS —BREST— PARIS



The founder of the Alberta Randonneurs looks back on his 1,200-km rides and ahead to this year's big event in France

by **Jeff Shmoorkoff**



Paris-Brest-Paris even has its own dessert: the Paris-Brest, a wheel-shaped pastry. You can make your own by following a recipe by Calgary chef and former track racer Bob Matthews.



During the wee hours of a cool Monday morning on a September long weekend, I had finally peaked the highest paved highway in Canada. I was on Highwood Pass in Alberta's Kananaskis region. At 2,206 m elevation, I was solo and very sleep-deprived during my third day of cycling the Southern Tour of the Rocky Mountains (STORM) 1,000-km brevet. In the week before the ride, I had deprived myself of caffeine so my body would feel the chemical's benefits – mental alertness and beta oxidation of my fat stores for more energy – during the brevet. To stave off the urge to sleep, I took a 200-mg caffeine tablet. My mind was awakened. I was suddenly hyperalert with increasing energy.

As I began to descend, the whole night sky lit up dramatically as if a bright, sky-wide flare went off.

I was confused. What could this be? It wasn't a full moon. As I descended farther at more than 75 km/h, the light became brighter and more widespread. My mind began to play tricks on me. What was this all-consuming light: a comet, a meteor shower or maybe even a UFO? My heart rate increased and a feeling of doom overcame me. I soon became engulfed by the light.

Then, as I entered the fog that covered a high-speed corner, my panic left me. The strange glow was a semi-truck ascending the pass

with its lights reflecting in the fog that I had just entered. As I was initially above the fog, I could not see the truck until I was right beside it. I continued for the last 100 km to my finish in Canmore, Alta. I was cold and very tired after 70 hours of riding and limited sleep during the previous two nights. I had no sleep on the third day. At the end of the brevet, I simply put my gear and bike in my car and immediately fell asleep in the front seat. A few crash hours of sleep would be all I needed, just like a night on call during med school.



"At the start of PBP, I was amazed by the mass of people. There were all these languages being spoken as riders compared equipment, right down to the gear ratios."

Back then, I would drive the four hours or so back to Edmonton to continue my medical studies. All in a long weekend's work. A difficult 1,000-km brevet was now completed. It was done, and so was I for a few days. I would recover and forget all the mental and physical pain I had endured.

The long-distance, self-supported ride is what a randonneur does. The brevets can range in length from 200 km, 300 km, 400 km, 600 km and longer. Brevets have controls along the way so riders can record their progress. All riders must finish within a certain time limit. Each event challenges a rider's mind, body and equipment, even spirit. You set a goal and just need to achieve that goal. Once you do, there is a sense of accomplishment that only a sleep-deprived endurance cyclist can know. As with my experience at STORM, fatigue plays a role, as does forgetting the pain you feel during a

ride. Fellow randonneur Vaune Davis calls it "randonesia." As she put it, "You recover from the pain and you want to do it again. There is an addiction quality to it."

My long rides started with cycle touring. In the summer of 1986, I took the summer off after completing my bachelor of science at the University of Calgary. My goal was to get into medical school. I knew if that happened, I would be committed to and dedicated to the care of others. I'd have to work hard. Before that, I wanted to do something epic, so I mapped out a cross-Canada tour. I logged 12,000 km on my first bike, which I purchased in 1981 for commuting to university. It was a Canadian-made Sekine fitted with a triple crank. I was fully loaded with front and back panniers and carried a tent, sleeping bag and clothes. It was heavy at 100 lb. Some days I rode more than 200 km. I carried a helmet and only wore it down Rogers Pass. I sent it back to Calgary while on the north shore of Lake Superior. Funny how this is now taboo. I actually feel naked without a helmet on.

After that ride, I chanced upon an article about Paris-Brest-Paris, the 1,200-km randonée and premier event of the discipline. I couldn't believe that roughly 5,000 riders from all over the world covered that distance in one go. It was not a race but rather a rally in which everyone who

finishes gets a medal for completing the ride within the 90-hour time limit. It was exactly what I wanted to do.

I founded the Alberta Randonneurs (a.k.a. Rocky Mountain Randonneurs) in 1987 and organized events. It was, however, too late to register these events as qualifiers for that year's edition of PBP. So, I drove to Saskatoon and did the qualifying Super Series (200 km within 13.5 hours, 300 km within 20 hours, 400 km within 27 hours and 600 km within 40 hours).

After some touring training in the Swiss and French Alps (I had to get the most from spending the money to get over the Atlantic on a student budget), I arrived in Paris. At the start of PBP, I was amazed by the mass of people. There were all these languages being spoken as riders compared equipment, right down to the gear ratios. At the time, some of the route was marked with chalk arrows on the roads.

At one point, in the dark, I and some riders took a wrong turn and did an extra 30 km. We then had our flashlights out looking for those arrows. I completed the 1987 edition in 81 hours and 16 minutes. I was only 24 years old, much younger than the average age of a randonneur. I returned to Alberta with a full devotion to the sport. Others were smitten, too and we had a club presentation for the 1991 edition of PBP, holding qualifiers in Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary, Medicine Hat and the mountains.

My training for the 1991 edition of PBP was a bit more enthusiastic. I rode the Raid Pyrénéen along the Spain/France border to the Mediterranean. It was 720 km long and featured 19 mountain passes, 11,000 m of ascent and a time limit of 100 hours. My friend and I did the ride completely self-supported. We were blessed with perfect conditions and slept on park benches with space blankets and foam pads. The local riders, who had help at the checkpoints, thought we were nuts doing the event without support.

After the Raid, we cycled the complete Mediterranean coast from Barcelona to the Italian border. Then we cycled the French Alps to Albertville. Finally, a train took us to Paris. I recall this edition of PBP felt tougher. Maybe I was tired. I was still young at 28 years old and wouldn't give up. I was full of enthusiasm. I completed it in 90 hours and 10 minutes. I later learned that I was an official finisher even though I was 10 minutes past the time limit, as the route was much longer than it was supposed to be. The officials lengthened the finishing time limit.

I recall calling my then-girlfriend Cheryl (now wife and mother of our two sons, Stephen and Austin). I told her I had finished the ride and was done. I was mentally and physically wasted. My cycling spirit was empty. I told her, "If I ever talk about doing this damn ride ever again, tell me 'No!'"

I graduated from medical school in 1992. My residency in family medicine was done in 1995. I did extra training in obstetrics and emergency medicine and was keen to start my practice in rural Alberta. Raising two active hockey-playing boys kept us very busy.

My wife kept me true to my word. She reminded me of how I felt after the 1991 event. I never did a randonneur event again. As I gained weight (peaked at 240 lb. for my 6-foot frame) and worked too much, I needed something that had a more manageable time commitment. I needed to practise what I preached to my patients – balance and fitness in family, mind, body and spirit. So I took up triathlons and duathlons.

By 2010, my boys were more independent and we continued to support their hockey careers. The following year, 2011, would be another PBP year and the 25th season of randonneuring in Alberta. It would be great to go back to Paris for my club's 25th. My wife quietly reminded me of our conversation in 1991. In typical male fashion, I didn't listen. I had heard about high dropout rates at previous PBPs. The organizers had set a new rule: interested riders for 2011 would have to ride qualifying

brevets in 2010 and 2011 instead of just in the year of the main event. I was re-hooked. Because of my work schedule at the time, I ended up riding the 300-km and 400-km qualifiers solo. Not fun. Not smart. But I finished. Did the Alberta Super series in 2010 and 2011 and was off to PBP again.

I enjoyed that event immensely. I had a great ride and finished feeling strong. I was 24 years older at 48 and my time was 81 hours and 26 minutes – only 10 minutes slower than on my inaugural PBP in 1987.

In 2014, I did all the necessary qualifiers for the next PBP. Even though Alberta had a cool, slow start to spring, I completed this year's 200-km, 300-km, 400-km brevets by late May wearing many layers. I finished the rest of the rides by mid-June. I have already pre-registered for the PBP that will run in August. What will the event bring? I don't know. I'm still happily suffering from randonesia.

RIGHT
Jeff Shmoorkoff,
still fresh on
Day 2 of Paris-
Brest-Paris 2011





A SHORT HISTORY OF A LONG RIDE

The first PBP was held in 1891, which makes the event older than the Tour de France. It was won by then-professional cyclist Charles Terront. Pierre Giffard, editor of *Le Petit Journal*, promoted the race, which, at the time, was for professionals. In the early years, only French riders were permitted to participate and demonstrate the new diamond safety frames and pneumatic tires. For that first event, 207 riders began the 10-day limit event. The winner finished in three days with a time of 71 hours and 22 minutes. In total, only 99 finished.

In 1901, the professional riders were separated from the amateurs. Female riders have always been permitted to participate. Randonneur-style riders were first allowed to ride PBP in 1931. As time went on, fewer and fewer professionals participated because the ride was difficult to train for and just too long. For a brief time, PBP was held every five years. Starting in 1971, it adopted its current four-year cycle.

CANADIANS AND PARIS-BREST-PARIS

Canadians began challenging themselves on the Paris-Brest-Paris route in 1979. The pioneers from this country who first went to Paris in 1979 are Wayne Phillips, John Hathaway, Gerry Pareja and Dan McGuire, all from B.C.

Eric Ferguson, also of B.C., has collected much data on Canucks at PBP. Fast Canadian finishers include Nancy Pau (Alberta) in 64:27 in 2003 and Keith Fraser (B.C.) in 50:09 in 1995. The record holder for the most completed PBPs goes to B.C. rider Deirdre Arscott for having done a total of seven, every event from 1987 to 2011. Two riders have completed six PBPs: Keith Fraser (B.C.) and Brian Leier (Manitoba). Only three have completed five PBPs: Ken Billingsley (Alberta and U.S.), Ken Bonner (B.C.) and Larry Lemesurier (Alberta).



MAPLE-LEAF RIDERS AT PBP BY YEAR

| YEAR | STARTERS | FINISHERS |
|------|----------|-----------|
| 1979 | 4 | 4 |
| 1983 | 14 | 13 |
| 1987 | 55 | 46 |
| 1991 | 84 | 55 + 10 * |
| 1995 | 61 | 51 |
| 1999 | 71 | 56 |
| 2003 | 91 | 76 |
| 2007 | 126 | 83 |
| 2011 | 110 | 80 |

* (hors delays/extra time granted)



Photos: Courtesy of the B.C. Randonneurs Cycling Club, Michel Dornet



OPPOSITE TOP
The start of the
Paris-Brest-Paris
ride in 1931

PBP QUICK FACTS

AGE

The oldest to complete the 2011 ride was 80-year-old German Friedhelm Lixenfeld; the youngest, 18-year-old (youngest age permitted) Blaesius Tanguy. For the female riders, the oldest was 68-year-old Marie-Hélène Vilette; the youngest, 25-year-old Lindmila Bataeva.

PARTICIPATION OVERALL

New records were set in 2011 with two riders having completed 11 PBPs: Daniel Ravet and Bernard Imbert, both from France.

BICYCLE TYPES

Bikes range through tandems, triplets, trikes, recumbents, one-speeds, recumbent tandems (some with the rear rider facing backwards), rowing bikes, rowing tandems and singlespeed as well as aerodynamic covered bikes.

AN INTERNATIONAL FIELD

PBP is the most international cycling event in the world. In 2007, for the second time, the international riders outnumbered the French. In 2015, the anticipated riders will represent five continents with more than 5,000 riders. In total, 55 countries will be represented.

Canada has randonneuring clubs in every region, except the territories: B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes.

"I have already pre-registered for the PBP that will run in August. What will the event bring? I don't know."

SIMPLE RULES

Below are some unwritten rules for randonneuring that come from the sport's governing body, the Audax Club Parisien.

- Be polite.
- Ride in a group, share the work and finish together.
- Attacks are not part of the sport.
- Follow rules of the event and the road. Don't use illegal vehicles to light the way at night or pace at any time.
- Be friendly and respectful of volunteers and officials. Without them, no one would be riding.
- Finish.

The equipment rules are not complicated either.

- You must have front and rear fixed lights. The rear lights should not flash.
- French law requires a reflective vest for night riding.
- At PBP, a helmet is recommended.
- Front and rear brakes are required.
- Handlebar extensions are not allowed as the ride is considered a peloton-type ride, by French and international rules.
- Support en route (except at checkpoints) is forbidden. 🚫



Tour of Alberta Preview

A STAGE-BY-STAGE LOOK AT CANADA'S BIGGEST RACE

by **Matthew Pioro**

For the third year in a row, the Tour of Alberta will draw pro riders from North America and abroad to the province that links the Prairies and the Rockies. The first two editions of the UCI 2.1 race stuck to the flatter parts of the province. But in 2015, the TOA finally takes advantage of the mountains to the west. The six stages are in the northwest of Alberta, only dipping as far south as Jasper. Below is the *Canadian Cycling Magazine* guide to the big event, with insights from Jeff Corbett of Medalist Sports, the TOA's technical director and the man behind the design of each stage.

STAGE 1 Sept. 2

GRANDE PRAIRIE Team time trial, 19.6 km

The Tour kicks off with a 19.6-km team time trial stage in Grande Prairie. "We thought this was a perfect year to do this. It gives teams an opportunity to get one more team time trial under their belts two weeks before Richmond." The Tour of Alberta has a UCI 2.1 designation, which means only 50 per cent of the teams in the race can be WorldTour teams. The rest are professional continental, continental and national teams. With the world championships in Richmond, Va., later in September, many of the U.S. teams will be targeting the TTT to get on the podium at home. Alberta will be the last chance for teams to race in a team time trial before worlds.

STAGE 2 Sept. 3

COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE Looped course, 172 km

The second stage of the event keeps the peloton in Grande Prairie for another day. Corbett describes the parcours as pretty mellow for the first 100 km, but it definitely has a sting at the end. As with stages in Drumheller and Lethbridge in previous editions of the TOA, Corbett uses the topography created by the local river, which in this case is the Wapiti River valley, to make a course with punchy climbs. "One thing I like about river bluff climbs is that usually they don't have an immediate descent," Corbett said. "You climb up the bluff to a plateau. You can't drift off back on a climb and bomb the descent and get back on." On this stage, riders climb up the river bluff and onto a plateau for about 10 km before they descend. "You got to hang on up those climbs. There's no immediate descent to save you."

STAGE 3 Sept. 4

GRANDE CACHE TO JASPER NATIONAL PARK Point-to-point, 182 km

Stage 3 is the first stage in the Tour's history that heads into the Rockies. It starts in Grande Cache and moves through rolling foothills toward the southeast. The peloton will come to Highway 16/Yellowhead Highway, which will take it to Jasper National Park. The bunch will then turn off onto Miette Road to the hot springs of the same name. This is where the grades really kick up. "It's sort of two climbs in one," Corbett said. "From where we leave the highway, it's 17 km to the line. They'll climb pretty good for about the first 6 km. That climb gets up to 9 per cent." Riders will then hit the king of the mountains point before about 5 km of descending. The final 6 km feature a gradual climb, averaging roughly 8 per cent in the final 2 km. The scenery, especially the canyon that's visible on the descent before the final climb, is spectacular. "It's Alberta's postcard to the world," Corbett said.



STAGE 4 Sept. 5

TOWN OF JASPER TO MARMOT BASIN SKI AREA

Point-to-point with a three-lap circuit, 162 km

The second day in the mountains keeps the action within Jasper National Park. After leaving the town of Jasper, the group hits a 54-km circuit on Highway 93A and 93, the Icefields Parkway. Then, it's up Marmot Road. "This is real, big-time mountaintop finish stuff," Corbett said of the final ascent, which actually starts 2 km from Marmot Road, giving riders 12 km of climbing. "There are several sections that get to 8 or 9 per cent, but I think length is what's going to take its toll. We're talking something for a pure climber here."

STAGE 5 Sept. 6

EDSON TO SPRUCE GROVE Point-to-point, 206 km

It seems like there's only one way to get to get from Edson to Spruce Grove: a straight shot east on Highway 16. Corbett, however, found some other roads to make this flat stage interesting: 56.4 km of dirt roads throughout six sectors. "It's not what we dubbed 'Canadian pavé' last year," Corbett said referring to the dirt sections on Stage 4 of the 2014 TOA. "Those were dust-control roads. They take a gravel road and spray a layer of oil on it. Then they'll roll it and pack it down to form a pseudo-pavement, but a pavement that will deteriorate over the course of six months. That's what the Canadian pavé was, the broken-up remnants on dust-control roads." Corbett said 2015's bumpy surfaces are straight-up dirt roads with washboards, ripples and ruts. Teams will race hard to get to the dirt sectors first. It's best to be up front for safety and simple visibility in the dust. It will be a long, dirty day with many rattled riders at the end.

STAGE 6 Sept. 7

EDMONTON Circuit, 124 km

The TOA returns to the capitol city for the third year in a row and to the same circuit that closed the 2014 edition. "I'm a big believer in that circuit," Corbett said. "I think it was a little disappointing to me last year, that we had to do that circuit in the rain because it didn't let us see how dynamic of a circuit that can be. I think riders didn't take the downhills and the corners as aggressively as they would have had it been dry. So, I'd like to give it another go and see how it plays out." Corbett also said it's a circuit on which anything can happen as it's a pretty easy course for a break to stay out of sight of the main bunch. A group of escapees could stay away until the end. Last year's winner, Daryl Impey of Orica-GreenEdge, took the overall win from Tom Dumoulin by one second. Unlike the final day of some Grand Tours, this isn't a ceremonial stage. At the Tour of Alberta, it's a race right to the end. 🚴



The leader's jersey at a pre-race press conference



Adam de Vos of team Canada in the 2014 prologue

Stage 1 of the 2013 TOA from Strathcona County to Camrose



Cyclocross World Cup

Comes to Montreal

Patrice Drouin plans to bring the muddy discipline to a new level in Canada

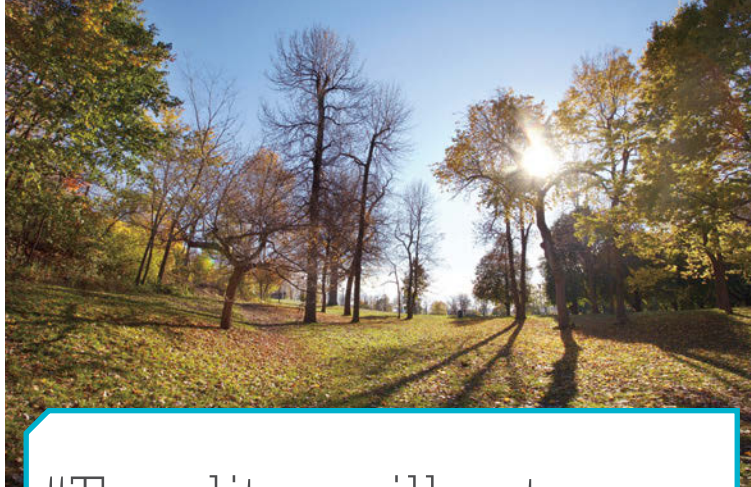
by **Matthew Pioro**

About 10 years ago, Patrice Drouin visited Parc Jean-Drapeau, just east of downtown Montreal. The president of Gestev, the company behind the Mont-Sainte-Anne World Cup races, was checking out the park as a site for another one of his events. The area, though, made him think of a certain cycling discipline. "I said, 'My God, this is perfect for cyclocross,'" he recalled. "There are the big trees, the city's skyscrapers in the background, a dirt track, the flats and hills. It's beautiful."

On Sept. 19, Drouin will bring cyclocross to Parc Jean-Drapeau around the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve Formula One race track. The course will be the site of the first cyclocross World Cup in Canada and the second in North America following Cross Vegas three days prior. Canada's elite cyclocross riders will compete against the top athletes in the world, names such as Sven Nys, Kevin Pauwels and Sanne Cant.

Drouin had a few challenges in bringing the World Cup to Montreal. He not only remembered saying that Parc Jean-Drapeau would be a great cyclocross venue, he remembered the reaction of the people he spoke to: "I said that to the guys who managed the place. And they said, 'What?' I said, 'You know? Cyclocross. They ride road bikes. They cross obstacles and get back on their bikes as fast as possible. You know that sport?'" It's an explanation he felt he gave many times, not just to property managers, but also the City of Montreal and private sponsors in his efforts to find support for the event. While cyclocross is a big spectator sport in Belgium and the Netherlands, it's just not as well known in Canada, even compared with road cycling and mountain biking. But Drouin has experience in promoting cycling disciplines unfamiliar to Quebec. In the late '80s, he championed mountain biking and helped to grow the sport in Quebec and Canada. Now, he wants to do the same with cyclocross.


There's an irony that cyclocross is playing catch-up to mountain biking. Cyclocross is an older discipline. In September 1989, Drouin was in Belgium working with the International Amateur Cycling Federation to develop mountain biking. He was in the offices of the Belgian cycling federation (KBWB/RLVB) surrounded by cyclocross. "Basically, on every wall of the offices was a picture of a cyclocross rider," he said. He and his colleagues even made sure the



"The elites will put on an amazing show"

upcoming mountain biking season wouldn't conflict with that of cyclocross. Afterward, mountain biking grew and eclipsed cyclocross in North America.

In the past 10 years, however, cyclocross has been growing here. While it is mostly a participant sport in Canada and the U.S., Drouin thinks the time is right to develop it as a spectator sport on the European model. "We want to showcase the sport with a course that is spectacular and we want to do it properly. It's definitely the goal to promote the sport and make it proper entertainment. We want to create nice obstacles so people can appreciate the how fast and agile the guys and girls are. They can climb stairs as fast as almost anybody can go down. The elites will put on an amazing show," he said.

The inaugural Montreal World Cup will be shown live on TV in Quebec. There will also be a feed online. Unlike the Mont-Sainte-Anne World Cup, the cyclocross event won't have a festival like Vélirium associated with it. Drouin is building to that level. But, of course, in the true European tradition, there will be beer. "That was one of the first things we discussed about the site: how do we do a track around the beer garden?" he said. "I think people here will understand the sport quickly with that." 

Photos: Paul Carstairs / Alamy / AllCanadaPhotos.com, Balint Hamvas



TOP
Parc Jean-Drapeau,
St. Helen's Island,
Montreal

LEFT
Kevin Pauwels
racing the 2014
world cyclocross
championships
in Hoogerheide,
Netherlands

OPPOSITE
Legend Sven Nys
entertains a sea
of spectators at
the 2014 world
cyclocross
championships




Check out national
champion Mike
Garrigan's
thoughts on
Montreal's new
World Cup event.

25 YEARS OF MONT- SAINTE- ANNE



by **Dean Campbell**

**This August,
the world's
top mountain
bikers will do
what they've
done since
1991: Ride
the trails
of the iconic
Quebec venue**



East from Quebec City, the roads are jammed. At Montmorency Falls, where Highway 138 skirts along the north bank of the St. Lawrence River, cars topped with mountain bikes fill the eastbound lanes, all headed toward the same place. As the road winds uphill away from the river, a couple of false summits give way to the mountain, fronted by a large red sign with bright gold letters announcing Mont-Sainte-Anne.

Home to the longest-running event on the mountain bike World Cup calendar Mont-Sainte-Anne is known for its challenging race courses, exuberant fans and festival atmosphere. This year marks the event's 25th anniversary, and organizers are pulling out all the stops to make it an event to remember.

Patrice Drouin grew up near Mont-Sainte-Anne in the 1970s, spending much of his free time outside. Answering the call of bigger mountains, Drouin relocated to Vancouver and, in the early 1980s, came across the first mountain bike he's ever seen. "I was in Whistler and saw a guy riding this weird bike and I literally jumped in front of him and grabbed the handlebars to ask him what the bike was," recalls Drouin.

Drouin fell in love with the sport. Riding any bike he could get his hands on, exploring the mountains of the Sea to Sky region, Drouin saw the potential of the sport in his home province. He returned to Quebec and began

distributing bikes for Rocky Mountain Bicycles and Tom Ritchey. But there was a problem. Because Drouin was the first to bring mountain bikes to Quebec, there was no understanding of the sport – people didn't know where, or how, to ride. Drouin also had to lay the groundwork needed for mountain biking to thrive.

Organizing races, writing a rider code of ethics and working to develop trails became key aspects of developing the sport in the province. Local races came first, followed by Quebec Cups, Canada Cups and national championships. By the late 1980s, Drouin was invited to Europe to help design and create the mountain bike World Cup. In 1991, the mountain bike World Cup made its debut and included Mont-Sainte-Anne in the calendar thanks largely to Drouin's influence. Since then, the sport has evolved, in no small part, thanks to the work of Drouin and his team at Gestev – the events company he founded in 1989 to help prepare for the World Cup.



"In 1998, friends and I travelled in a VW Minibus just to check out the world championships," said Catharine Pendrel of the event held at Mont-Sainte-Anne that year. "That was the first time I had seen a professional mountain bike racer, and the first time I had seen women that looked like that on a bike: powerful, glossy, and professional. For me, it was a window into the world of professional mountain biking and what was out there beyond New Brunswick Cup racing."

Pendrel has had mixed fortunes at Mont-Sainte-Anne. In 2010, riding in the World Cup champion's jersey at the world championships, she finished an agonizing fourth place after being passed in the final corner. Two years later, Pendrel won the race on her way to a second World Cup title.

Geoff Kabush can't recall exactly how his first race at Mont-Sainte-Anne played out, although he knows it was in 1996. In the years since, he has finished on the podium four times: one second-place and three third-place finishes. He admits that the climbing on the Mont-Sainte-Anne doesn't suit him. When the trail turns downhill, however, he can quickly make up time on less technically capable riders.

Beyond the course itself, Sainte-Anne presents the complete package, which makes it a legend on the World Cup circuit. On race day, parking overflows from the resort lots and spills along both shoulders of the road. In the main parking lot, tents, pavilions and RVs emblazoned with the names of bike companies form the foundation of the expo area for the World Cup.

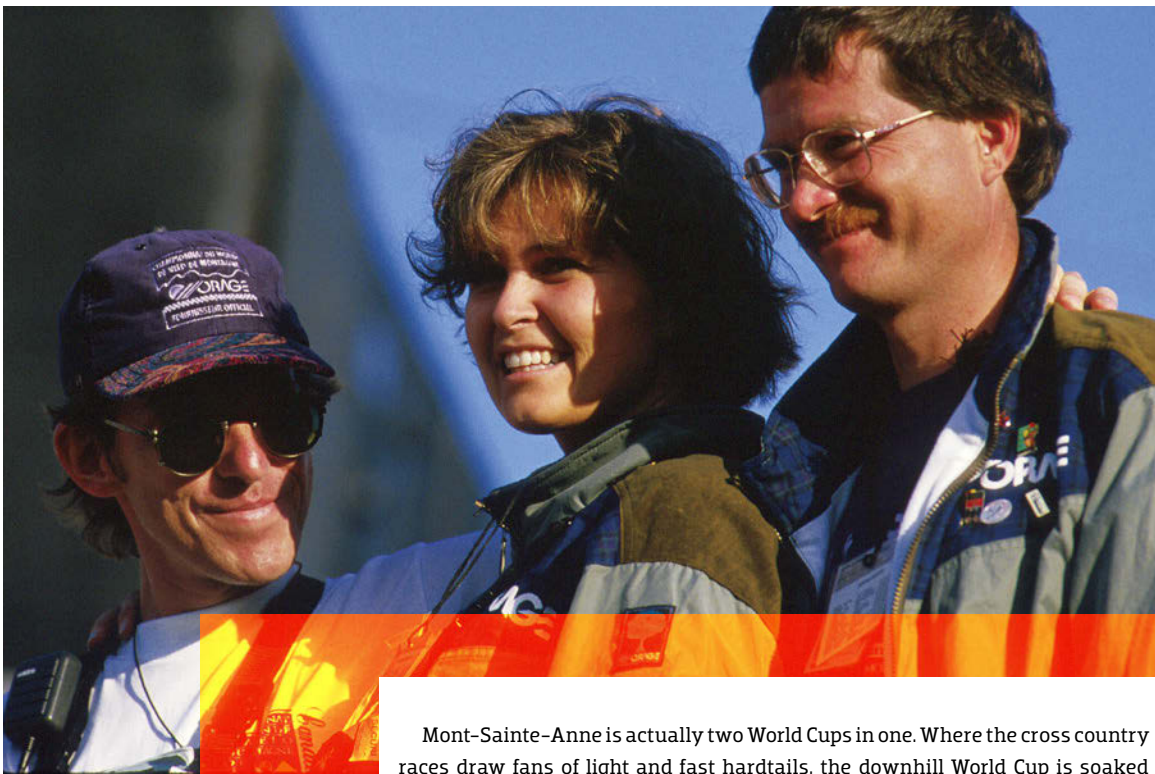
"Mont-Sainte-Anne stands alone as one of the only classics and monuments on the World Cup calendar," says Kabush. "The organization also understands that there has to be more than just a bike race to make it an event and they have done a great job making the weekend one big party."

The party atmosphere is in no small part due to Marie-Hélène Prémont. From nearby Château-Richer, Prémont was the first Quebec rider to win at the Mont-Sainte-Anne World Cup in 2005, an accomplishment she repeated two more times over her career. Even now, though largely retired from competition, Prémont is a fixture at the race, drawing the attention of fans and media.

PREVIOUS
Geoff Kabush
races the 2012 uci
mountain bike
World Cup XCO in
Mont-Sainte-Anne

OPPOSITE
Negotiating down
the Beatrice at the
2010 mountain
bike world
championships in
Mont-Sainte-Anne

ABOVE
The 2011 uci
mountain bike
World Cup



TOP
Patrice Drouin with Chantal Lachance and Pierre Lizotte at the 1992 uci mountain bike World Cup

OPPOSITE TOP
The start of the 2014 uci mountain bike World Cup

OPPOSITE
BOTTOM LEFT
Marie-Hélène Prémont wins the 2006 uci xco mountain bike World Cup

OPPOSITE
BOTTOM RIGHT
Steve Smith wins the downhill competition in 2013

Mont-Sainte-Anne is actually two World Cups in one. Where the cross country races draw fans of light and fast hardtails, the downhill World Cup is soaked in energy drinks and cheering fans ringing cowbells and blasting air horns as riders pass in a flash of bright colours. A group of fans clang a seatpost in the orphaned front triangle of a long-ago crashed downhill frame. Tires hum on hard-packed dirt, cling to roots and ruts in the forest and go silent when rider and bike lift off and fly through the air over jumps and drops. As the racers slice through the course toward the bottom, the crowds – and the din – multiply. Neither rain nor the often hot and humid weather dampen fan enthusiasm.

Coming into the 2010 world championships, Steve Smith of Cassidy, B.C., had just one World Cup podium to his credit, but that result gave him the confidence he needed to charge hard at the worlds. In front of a delirious home crowd, Smith ripped to a second-place finish. "I went into the 2011 season with a different approach," says Smith about the boost of confidence he got from worlds. "Racing has so much to do with confidence, and sometimes confidence comes with time and ticking off goals. I finished fourth overall that year."

Smith came to the 2013 Mont-Sainte-Anne World Cup determined to take on Gee Atherton, who had built a runaway lead in the points. "I went in with the most aggressive attitude I could. The first practice run was all about starting it out hard, and giving it a little extra. I won the practice and qualifying," Smith says.

Meanwhile, Atherton had crashed in qualifying and in the slowest-to-fastest start order on race day, began his run with about 20 riders remaining.

"When it got down to the top 10 guys, it started to rain like crazy so we had no idea what was going to happen," says Smith. "We kind of thought it was Gee's race for sure, with the podium going to whoever could go fast in the rain. I ended up putting it all on the line and did a bit of a risky run through some slippery areas, but took the win."

After Mont-Sainte-Anne, Smith won every race he entered at Crankworx a week later. The streak continued and at the World Cup finale; Smith took the overall title. But legendary races earn their status by being tough. Smith broke his ankle during training on the Mont-Sainte-Anne course in 2014, followed by more injuries that led to almost a year on crutches and off his bike.



Photo: Tom Moran



The two courses at Mont-Sainte-Anne are due to the vision of technical director Serge Veuthey, carved from rock and dirt, darting through clearings and forest. Veuthey first attended the race for the 1998 world championships, volunteering as a course worker. Within a couple of years, he was helping to design courses at other World Cup venues while serving as a member of the design team at Mont-Sainte-Anne. Since 2004, he has taken full responsibility for both the cross country and downhill courses. In the decade since, Veuthey has been obsessed with continuing the design process through annual changes.

"I dream about it at night actually," says Veuthey, who balances the needs of athletes, spectators and media when designing a course layout. "While the World Cup races are taking place, I'm already looking at the course and the ways it could be improved for the next year. In terms of athletes, I want them to have a good challenge, have a course demanding and technical, but still have fun doing it."

The Beatrice, a jagged rock garden descent, has been a fan favourite since its introduction on the cross country course in 2009. The plan was to develop the section ahead of the 2010 worlds, and instantly, the feature was polarizing. Some riders were shocked at the level of skill that part of the course demands.

Strong technical riders relished the advantage the Beatrice would offer. "Difficult sections like La Beatrice can really mess with riders' heads; especially if their bike isn't set up for proper technical riding," says Kabush.

"That kind of section was a first and it was somehow shocking for some riders," recalls Veuthey. "But the crème de la crème really loved it. Over the years, we've developed new lines to this section and the rest of the courses around the world also created similar sections."

The downhill course is equally spectacular. Expecting an easy route to the bottom is a mistake, but riders such as Smith have proven the rewards of bravery and aggression. "It's a unique track, one of the longest on the circuit. Usually it starts with some fast stuff in the top, and you fly through some open sections," explains Smith. "Then it dekes in and out of the trees and you find yourself in a technical area. As you come out under the chairlift, it gets fast again. You get used to going 60 to 70 km/h and then cut into a treed and rocky section and it's a lot slower and more technical."

For 2015, both courses are expected to change slightly. Certain defining features – like the Beatrice – will stay as part of the course, while others may be changed or left out.

"In order to have great World Cup courses, all the details are scrutinized," says Veuthey. "We question whether some course sections of Mont-Sainte-Anne still generate excitement. Sometimes, it's good to keep them the way they are, but sometimes, it's nice to relocate and create new sections that might become new legends of the race."



Photos: Rob Jones, John Gibson Photo: Rob Jones



MSA TIMELINE

- 1991** — Hosts first World Cup
- 1994** — A new downhill course designed to redefine the technical challenges of a downhill World Cup
- 1995** — First Canadian podium, Alison Sydor, silver in xco
- 1996** — First Canadian gold medal, Alison Sydor
- 1998** — Hosts first world championships
- 2001** — First Canadian gold medal in men's xco, Roland Green
 - Double gold for Canada in xco, Roland Green and Chrissy Redden
- 2003** — First Vélirium and the first edition of Vélo Mag Raid
- 2004** — Host first Canadian championships
 - First podium finish at Mont-Sainte-Anne for local racer Marie-Hélène Prémont
- 2005** — Marie-Hélène Prémont wins gold in xco
- 2006**
- 2008**
- 2010** — Hosts second world championships
 - First Canadian podium in downhill, Steve Smith, silver
- 2013** — First Canadian gold medal in downhill, Steve Smith




Celebrations for the 25th anniversary of the race will add to the festival atmosphere that helps the event stand apart from other stops on the World Cup circuit. Vélirium is the bike-culture festival that shares the stage with the races. Art installations, activities for spectators of all ages and live music all play a part. Big years – such as the world championships that coincided with the 20th anniversary of the Mont-Sainte-Anne venue – stand out, but plans for the 2015 edition promise to set a new standard.

"We want to show the history of Mont-Sainte-Anne," explains Drouin. There will be a gallery of photography from previous editions. A museum will showcase artifacts curated from racers, fans and event archives.

"We'll also do a Legends race to get athletes from the past to come and meet fans. Those who have participated and won medals – names like Brian Lopes, John Tomac, Rolland Green, Alison Sydor and others. It would be great for the young public to see how these legends have been involved and continue to be involved in the bike industry now."

While there are the course features, manufacturers' swag and old memorabilia, Mont-Sainte-Anne is about the people. Drouin and partner Chantal Lachance lead a team of more than 30 staff to help put the festivities and competition in place. They reinforce the idea that the World Cup isn't just a race, but that fans and athletes alike should have a fun time.

"We have invested so much in the trails and organization that we have a lot of support now," says Drouin. "Even in the difficult times, we always delivered a good event for racers, but also built up the festival around the World Cups to help promote the sport and keep up with the development of the sport." 

TOP LEFT
Catharine Pendrel
training for the
2012 event

TOP RIGHT
The 2009 UCI
mountain bike
World Cup

BOTTOM
Steve Smith comes
into the finish at
the 2013 World Cup





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Road Test

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Trail Test

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In Depth

Ebikes for Everyone **p.80**

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Ridley 2016 Fenix SL **p.90**



Felt AR5

Aero without compromise

| Felt AR5 | |
|------------|--|
| Components | Shimano 105 |
| Wheels | Felt Aero Road R3 |
| Sizes (cm) | 48, 51, 54, 56, 58, 61 |
| Price | \$2,700 |
| Website | feltbicycles.com |

reviewed by **Andre Cheuk**

On the bike, wind is your ever-present enemy. You can't see it, and you can't you always feel it, but it is always working against you, pushing back as you pedal forward. In response, an entire arsenal of aero gear has been developed to help you slice through the air, everything from wheels to frames, clothing to helmets.

But the chase for aerodynamic superiority is not without cost. Wheels tend to be heavier and more expensive; helmets, hotter and less comfortable; and frames are heavier, less comfortable – often lacking in stiffness and ride feel – and cost more. Or at least, they did.

The latest generation of aero road bikes, of which Felt's AR5 is a good example, see fewer compromises than before, and perform so similarly to their

classic road bike cousins as to be all but indistinguishable while adding a dose of aero performance.

Felt has been making aero road bikes longer than most brands; the current AR lineup is in its second generation, at a time when a few major manufacturers are still on their first offering. According to Felt's road product manager Dave Koesel, Felt used "CFD and wind-tunnel time to develop and test the shape, specifically for the kinds of speed and yaw angle that cyclists will see, rather than adapt airfoils developed for aerospace use." The shapes are identical from the top-tier AR FRD model to the AR5, so aero performance is the same, only weight differs.

In addition to slippery shapes, the AR5 employs a full complement of tricks borrowed from time trial bikes, such as internal-cable routing and tucking the rear brake under the bottom bracket, leaving the seatstays smooth and aero. Felt employs Shimano's 105 direct-mount brakes, which offer good modulation and power, unlike some under-the-BB brakes. The brake assembly also is relatively easy to adjust, though still not as easy as traditional seatstay-mounted brakes. The

brakes, however, are a good compromise between aero and accessibility.

The AR5's front end tracks corners accurately and gives good feedback, allowing me to carve turns with confidence. The oversize bottom bracket and tall chainstays provide good power transfer. It was great to get out of the saddle when punching up short rollers, and feel as if every watt I put into my pedals went to the wheel.

At the same time, the AR5 offers an impressively smooth and composed ride. Much of the credit goes to the proprietary seatpost, which is cleverly designed with an internal expander, eliminating the need to overbuild the post in order to resist the clamping

force from a seat collar. The design offers the rider more compliance. Even the saddle clamp is surrounded by a

thin layer of elastomer for vibration damping. Koesel explains, "People complained about how stiff and uncomfortable it is to ride a time trial bike. That's because the tubes are

GEAR

ROAD
TEST

designed to be aero, not compliant or comfortable. We didn't want the AR to ride like a time trial bike. So with the bike, we did everything we could to make it ride more comfortably, like the patented seatpost design."

During my test period, I rode the ARS in an early season road race, the Heck of the North, which involves stretches of unpaved roads. I certainly felt no worse for wear compared with times I've been on a more traditional road bike. Nor did I wish for a different bike during the gravel stretches. Wishing I had been more diligent with my winter training? Sure. But a different bike? No.

Shimano's new 11-speed 105 drivetrain, though a shade less crisp than Dura-Ace, is just as accurate and reliable. The ARS is also equipped with Shimano's new 105 mid-compact crankset (52/36-tooth), which offers great versatility on a variety of terrain, a smart choice. Felt's house-brand bars and stem are shaped nicely and work as they should. The wheels are the only component that doesn't quite match the highs of the rest of the bike.

Felt's Aero Road R3 wheelset is a bit on the heavy side. Also, despite the name, the wheels are not particularly aero with their shallow rim depth and high spoke counts. But they are solid as an everyday training set. To put deeper carbon wheels on the ARS would push it well north of \$3,500 mark. When the time comes to get a set of race wheels, the ARS's frame is more than worthy of the upgrade.

There is one downside to Felt's ARS. It is more expensive than the Felt's comparably equipped, but non-aero, F5 by \$600. Chalk that up to the added R&D and more complex manufacturing of the ARS. Even free speed doesn't come without cost, it would appear. But if your budget allows, and speed is what you are after, you will get it with the ARS and give up very little in return. **G**

Who Has Cheated the Wind?

Three slippery road machines

Trek Madone 2.5 \$2,300

Trek's aero frames use the Kammtail shape, a.k.a. the truncated airfoil, to keep air moving smoothly by. The truncated airfoil has a flat trailing edge, which you can see, for example, on the down tube. The air moves past this flat edge as if it was following a complete airfoil. The Madone 2.5 has mix of Shimano parts: Ultegra shifters and derailleurs, and 105 cassette and chain. The excellent saddle, the Paradigm 3, is from Trek's component brand Bontrager. (trekbikes.com)

Giant Propel Advanced Pro \$5,499

Giant, which came later to the aero road game than many other companies, introduced the Propel in 2013. The line of bikes, in which the Advanced Pro sits in the middle, has put the Taiwan-based organization at the front of the pack. Unlike the Advanced SL model, the Advanced Pro doesn't have an integrated seatpost, which detracts a bit from its wind-managing abilities, but makes adjustments easier. The brakes are Giant's SpeedControl SL Ti – essentially, V-brakes. The front brakes are tucked in behind the fork to make for a more aero setup. (giant-bicycles.com)

Scott Foil Premium Di2 \$11,949

The Foil's tubes gain their aerodynamic advantages with the truncated airfoil. Scott calls this feature the F01 Aero Technology. It gives the frame all the advantages of an airfoil with less material. That composite material, in the case of the Foil Premium Di2, is HMX carbon fibre. It's Scott's mid-range carbon fibre, which the company says is 14 per cent lighter on a full frame than its first-tier HMF material. The gruppo is electric: Shimano's Dura-Ace Di2. The RR1.0 carbon clincher rims are by Scott's house-brand Syncros. (scott-sports.com)—MP



Norco Sight C 7.3

An all-mountain bike with snappy handling

reviewed by **Stuart Kernaghan**

Norco is another bike brand that has embraced 27.5" wheels wholeheartedly. The Canadian company offers mid-size wheel bikes for virtually every discipline, with the majority of them finding a home in the Sight line of 140-mm-travel all-mountain bikes. The Sights come in carbon, aluminum and women-specific models.

Norco Sight C 7.3

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Components | Shimano XT |
| Suspension | 140-mm Fox Float 32 Fit CTD performance fork, Fox Float CTD BV performance level shock |
| Wheels | 27.5" Sun Helix TR 25 tubeless-ready |
| Sizes | S, M, L, XL |
| Price | \$5,275 |
| Website | norco.com |

The Sight C 7.3 I tested is the third model in the carbon series. All the carbon models feature a carbon front triangle/seatstay combo with

an aluminum chainstay, 42-mm rear spacing and internal cable routing.

The 2x10 drivetrain on the 7.3 is a collection of Shimano parts: XT shifters, a Deore front derailleur and XT Shadow rear derailleur, an SLX 38/24-tooth crankset and an off-spec SRAM 11-36 tooth cassette. Brakes are Shimano SLX, and come with 180-mm rotors. Suspension is handled by a Fox Float 32 FIT CTD fork with 140 mm of travel and a Fox Float CTD BV shock. The parts package also includes a Rockshox Reverb Stealth dropper post, a Schwalbe Hans Dampf 2.25" tire on the rear, and Magic Mary 2.35" rubber on the front and Sun Helix TR 25 tubeless-ready rims. A size XL bike with tubes and Shimano XT Trail pedals weighs in at 30.6 lb., putting it on the heavy side by about 2 lb. more than comparable-size carbon-and-aluminum 27.5" bikes.

Norco has designed a very good all-mountain bike. The 67.5-degree head angle works well in steeper terrain without being too raked out on single-track or climbs, while the 73.5-degree

seat-tube angle improves the bike's climbing prowess. This was one of the first bikes I've tested in a while that didn't feel like it would have benefited from a travel-adjust fork.

At the cockpit, Shimano brakes and Reverb levers generally don't play nicely together, and the SLX levers are an even worse pairing than an XT/Reverb combo: I had to run the Reverb lever parallel to the ground.

The Sight is a particularly competent technical descender, and it gave me the confidence to tackle (and clean) a steep rock face on one of my regular trails for the first time. There is less front-to-back flex on this Fox fork than on earlier models, which is a very welcome improvement. The burly Schwalbe tires have great traction on North Shore trails, but they may be a little beefy in some riding areas.

A shorter-than-average wheelbase makes for snappy handling, increased manoeuvrability and a bike that's lively at speed. The Sight does display the positive traits of mid-size wheels, but I did get hung up or bounced around on rough sections of trail that I typically clean when riding a 29er.

Although the Sight as a whole has a lot going for it, this particular model has some shortcomings. Probably the biggest was the lack of a rear derailleur with a clutch mechanism to take up slack in the chain. My test ride on the 7.3 suffered from a very noisy drivetrain, several dropped chains (all of which got stuck between the granny ring and the carbon frame) and feedback from the chain when the suspension was compressed. I would have gladly traded the XT parts for a full SLX drivetrain with a clutch derailleur.

The Sight is a very capable all-mountain bike and the geometry is definitely dialed, but the component choices on the 7.3 put a bit of a damper on the ride experience. Talk your Norco dealer into making some changes before you leave the store, and you'll have a great bike. **G**

GEAR

TRAIL
TEST





Cannondale F-Si Carbon 2

An entry model with top specs
for tearing up the XC course

reviewed by Brad Hunter

A brand's base model of a bike line usually shows cost-saving choices throughout its spec. Often the frame material and production process are altered as well. You don't see those measures taken with the Cannondale F-Si series of bikes. Even the entry model, the Carbon 2, has the Ballistic high-modulus carbon-fibre frame equipped with the new Lefty 2.0 fork, SRAM X01 1x11 drivetrain, Stan's ZTR Arch EX rims and Cannondale's own lightweight cranks, carbon seatpost and handlebar. Out of the box, my large test bike weighed a svelte 22 lb. without pedals.

A serious bike such as this in my possession got me thinking, "Hey, I could probably do pretty well at a race

on this thing," even though I had no prior plans to go to an XC competition or to train for one. So, I signed up for the next local race on the schedule, which left me four days to get used to the bike and recon the race course before the start gun would go off.

I wanted to test the bike as it comes out of the box. But after my pre-ride of the very hilly and rocky, root-strewn course, I realized that I was in for some suffering come race day. A bike that is going to be ridden at maximum effort for 90 minutes should have some degree of personal tweaking.

While the layback Save 2 seatpost was ultra-compliant when combined with the 73-degree seat angle, I found it didn't allow the saddle to come forward enough to my preferred riding position. As well, I would need the shortest compatible stem available to combat the unavoidably higher handlebar position inherent on 29" rigs.

If this bike was my personal steed, I would swap out the inner tubes by adding the required valves and sealant for tubeless.

Cannondale F-Si Carbon 2

| | |
|------------|---|
| Components | SRAM X01 |
| Suspension | Lefty 2.0 PBR 100 29 |
| Wheels | Stan's ZTR Arch EX 29, Lefty SM front hub, Formula DCL-301 rear hub |
| Sizes | S, M, L, XL |
| Price | \$5,420 |
| Website | cannondale.com |

It wouldn't be a big undertaking as the stock rims and tires are tubeless-ready. This step would increase the already-impressive bump-smoothing ability of this hardtail frame's ride and help the Schwalbe Racing Ralph tires find some added grip.

I would have liked the handlebar-mounted remote lockout that comes standard on the higher models. I found myself unable to switch between the open and locked settings fast enough in race situations, especially as a right-hander reaching for the lockout button on the only side the fork has, left. Other than that, the fork performed well with no detectable stiction or flex, and setup was very quick and easy.


With features on the F-Si, such as its asymmetrical rear end that allows for stiffer, shorter chainstays and improved chainline and a stronger, non-dished rear wheel, Cannondale has shown again what can happen when you don't follow the crowd. Overall the bike's handling was predictable and stable. When properly dialed in, this bike could take a more serious racer than me to the podium. **G**



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The modern bike not only has cables that sometimes need to be managed, but electronics often need to be secured to the frame. **Cable ties** (\$8 for a bag of 50) may not be pretty, but they do the trick. —MP 

Brad Hunter, *CCM* writer and mountain bike tester, says what he brings on the trail is very similar to what he takes on the road. For his mountain bike rides, he says a multi-tool with a chain tool is essential. He also carries duct tape and a toe strap. "And maybe a whistle in case you fall off a cliff," he says with a laugh, but we're not sure if he's joking.



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Ebikes for Everyone

Pedal-assist machines are growing in popularity.

Here's why, and why you could be into them, too

by **Dan Dakin**

GEAR

IN DEPTH

It starts with one curious neighbour and spreads down the quiet, small-town Ontario street like gossip.



"New bike?" asks the electrician in his early 30s who has been talking about replacing his rusted-out mountain bike for years.

"Just a tester," comes my reply. It's the same reply I've given many times before. But then comes the unintentional sales pitch. "Come take it for a spin."

After a few minutes, the neighbour is back with a giant smile on his face. This isn't like any bicycle he's ever tried. He calls to his wife. "You've got to try this thing," he says.

She takes it for a spin and comes back raving about how much fun it was.

On a beautiful spring morning, the black bicycle gets passed around like a new baby at a family Christmas gathering. Up and down the seat is raised and lowered letting a group of people with ages spanning nearly four decades all give it a try. They take it down a steep hill around the corner, just to experience pedalling back up. The bike is a Specialized Turbo. And unlike a bike any of these curious neighbours has ever ridden before, this one is electric.

Let's get one thing straight right off the top.

We're not talking about the lowest form of ebikes: the ones that don't require pedalling and are often ridden down the side of the road at their speed-governed pace of 32 km/h by people with suspended licences and helmets on backwards.

Instead, we're talking about power-assisted bicycles that still have to be pedalled to move, but have a battery-powered motors to "amplify" the riders' efforts. Other than oversize rear hubs or bottom bracket housings, and of course the obvious large batteries, these ebikes typically look like traditional bikes. By definition, they're known as pedelecs. In Canada, the power amplification is capped off at 32 km/h by law. That's not to say an ebike can't go any faster, but any power beyond that speed comes from the rider's legs.



Many bicycle manufacturers are either already producing an ebike or researching how to enter the market. Those ebikes are a growing part of cycling that isn't going away. "All bike companies globally look at this and realize it's not something they can ignore," said Chad Price, director of city bike products for Specialized. "If you're an independent bike dealer, you're looking at the changing demographic of customers. They're getting older and we're just not bringing enough young people in. That's why a lot of people are investing in it. It's a category almost everybody feels they need to be in."

Patents on electric bicycles go back more than 125 years to the late 1800s. But while a few variations have been attempted since then, the segment didn't ignite until battery technology improved vastly a century later. Electric motors are an important part of the ebike system, but modern battery technology, such as the commonly used lithium manganese, have allowed weights, charging times and price to come down significantly while battery life, safety and output power have improved greatly.

So the technology has improved and the prices have come down, but the big question remains: you're not going to show up to the Sunday group ride throw-down on one of these things, right? So then if companies are so intent on developing and producing them, who's buying them?

The slowpoke

Many a marriage has been strained by a couple trying to ride together. Inevitably, one of the two is faster and ends up riding ahead while the other struggles behind. For both, the frustration level climbs with each passing kilometre. Add a power-assisted bicycle to the mix, however, and the playing field is levelled instantly.

The anti-climber

There aren't many people who like riding mountain bikes uphill as much as down. It's the reason why there are such things as shuttles and lifts at gravity-fuelled parks. Imagine, though, being able to save energy on a two-hour climb up a mountain pass by putting your bike into ebike mode. Perhaps your knees can't handle the low-cadence grinding it takes to get up hills anymore, but you're not ready to put the bike away for good. Power assistance could be the answer.

The commuter

People who want to ride to work without showing up with sweaty armpits and backs are the driving force behind the growing ebike market. Mountain ebikes are gaining some popularity, but the vast majority of power-assisted offerings from companies around the world are targeted directly at people wanting to move about a city faster and with less effort.

Notice that nowhere on that list is the weekend warrior or Wednesday-night world champion. Unlike any other segment presented to bike manufacturers, ebikes are enveloped in controversy. "There's something inherently wrong about ebikes to performance riders," Price said. "It's easy to just kind of look at and say 'I can't even think about this. It's just really wrong.'"

What the weekend warriors may not realize though is that an ebike could allow them to ride more. Among the ebike's growing customer base are experienced

cyclists who ride into work in their dress clothes. They use heavy power assistance to avoid sweating on the way in, but then ride home with no motorized help to squeeze in a quick training session.

Scott Graham, who heads up the Canadian distributor for the German bike brand Cube, said part of the problem that leads to controversy is confusion over what exactly is classified as an ebike. "There is very little co-operation across the industry," he said. "In the U.S., there is all kinds of noise about ebikes as a collective. In Canada, the segment is just ramping up."

Government bodies, land managers and law enforcement agencies around the world are trying to figure out how to classify something that can change from a traditional bicycle into a battery-powered, pedal-assisted machine at the push of a button. Even municipalities with public bicycle paths are having to educate themselves on the differences among various ebike classes, most of which aren't standardized at all.

On Prince Edward Island, complaints are mounting over the use of ebikes on the famous Confederation Trail that spans 470 km through the province. "Over the past two or three years, we have been getting a lot of calls," said Kevin MacLaren, program and operations supervisor for P.E.I. Provincial Parks.


Like many similar trail networks across the country, there's no formal language in the P.E.I. Trail Act saying ebikes of any kind are banned. That could change soon, however. "In the next few months we will be putting in a clause in our trail regulations regarding the use of ebikes. We just have not figured out the proper wording and then it has to be passed by executive council within our government," he said.



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As for the use of ebikes on singletrack mountain bike trails, that's a powder keg of its own. "Trail access is going to be a major issue and will come back to the culture of mountain bikers being in touch with nature," said Price.

In 2012, the International Mountain Bike Association wrote a policy statement about electric mountain bikes saying they should fall under the classification of "motorized." "The use of a motor, whether internal combustion or electric, would require changing the classification to a motorized use. IMBA would support the use of ebikes anywhere that we could also support other motorized uses," the association wrote in its white paper on the issue.

The Canadian IMBA chapter, like its counterparts around the world, concurs with that stance. "We support IMBA's global perspective on eMTBing," IMBA Canada director Lora Woolner said. "IMBA has been examining the topic of eMTBs for several years already and I believe deserves some credit for putting out guidance since 2011 to 2012."

But Scott Graham, whose company is now importing both hardtail and full-suspension Cube electric mountain bikes, said the arguments against their use on trails don't necessarily stand up. "Pedestrians, cyclists, horses, ATVs – depending on the perspective and vested interest of any group, there's an argument for the exclusion of another," he said. "From a trail preservation perspective, bike-handling skills may be more relevant than pedal-assist. As for the right to access terrain previously the domain of stronger thighs, that's a debate based on social attitude, not technical advantage."

The fear of many staunch no-ebike proponents seems to be the threat of dirt bike-like torque causing trail-destroying wheel spin. It's not a relevant worry, according to Graham. "The motor senses subtle force on the crank and gently amplifies it within the boundaries of the selected setting. There's no sudden or excessive torque that cuts ruts like a motocross machine," he said. "It can be argued that the ability to maintain momentum on a climb or over bumpy terrain can reduce wheel slip. And going downhill, gravity turns all bikes into pedal-assist."

Price said Specialized is especially sensitive to the controversial nature of ebikes because its customers are the performance-minded cyclists often speaking out against the new battery-powered rides. "We feel that the closer we stay to a bicycle and a bicycle experience, the more we stay out of the fray of the real controversy," he said. "We're conscious of it, but time will heal that. But we're not going to push it because we really respect the riders and we've built a whole business around core performance riding, so we don't want to be in the forefront of telling people they're wrong."

The UCI, on the other hand, has drawn a very distinct line in the sand. After rumours of teams using tiny motors mounted inside frames to give them an advantage, cycling's governing body came out with a set of regulations covering "technological fraud," including the use of electric assistance. Bikes are now being inspected by the UCI after major races and the fines and suspensions for getting caught for "technical doping" are significant.

But what about technical doping in the local town-line sprint? Is that something to worry about? While the batteries, hubs and bottom brackets of the current iteration of ebikes are certainly conspicuous, what would stop a rider from using a power-assisted mountain bike, for example, to capture a pile of Strava king of the mountain titles? Nothing, really.

"We understand how this affects the community. That said, a very, very small percentage of activities on Strava are ebikes," said Megha Doshi, Strava's communications director. "At its core, Strava is an honour system. We expect athletes to be honest and refrain from recording activities performed by any motorized vehicles like ebikes."

Doshi said activities performed on an ebike are difficult to detect automatically, but that Strava will likely add an ebike-type option to make it easier for people to record their rides on the power-assisted bikes. "For now, we expect athletes to be honest and respectful of the Strava community," she said, pointing out that the online community's segment leaderboard guidelines prohibit the use of anything other than conventional bicycles for rankings.

But Strava cheats and technical dopers aside, ebikes aren't inherently bad.

As much as new product segments like ebikes are about increasing sales and



keeping companies in the black, the technology is also aimed at getting more people on two wheels. And isn't that ultimately what we're all trying to do?

"Based on my own experience on the sales floor and from what our dealers pass along, the early adopters span lifestyles and attitudes," Graham said. "All are rooted in how the new, improved and emerging ebike technology is able to enhance a person's physical capability and, thereby, enjoyment."

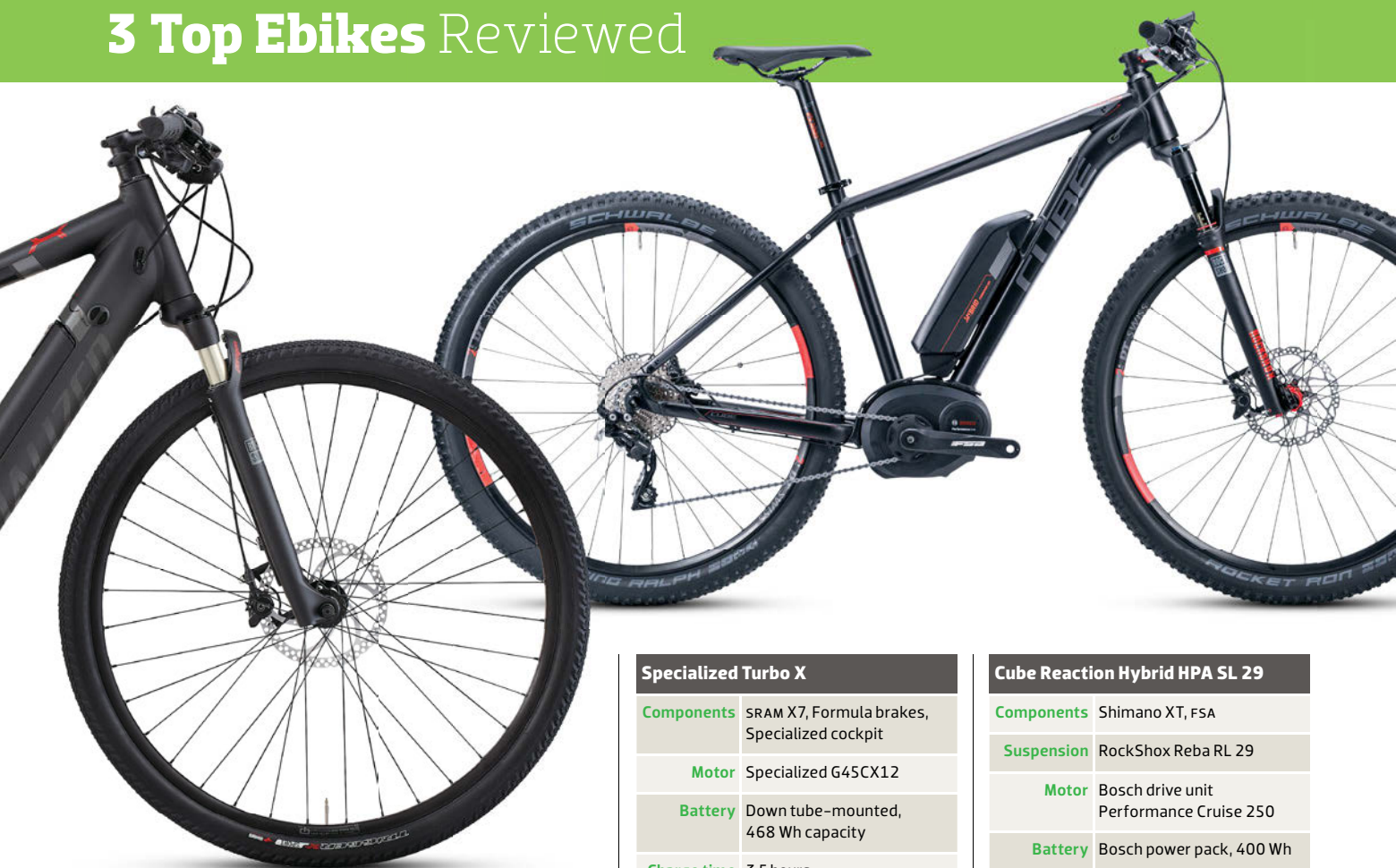
Bicycle riders who brush aside the technology or refuse to acknowledge its place in cycling also risk missing out on something that could improve their own lives or the lives of those around them. "I've sat in this place with people who couldn't wrap their heads around where they would use a Turbo," said Specialized's Price. "One by one through the years, they get out on them and the gears start turning. They start thinking, 'Maybe it's not for me, but my wife would love to be able to get out on a ride with me.' Or, 'My father is getting older and he would love this.'"

"A lot of the reasons they don't ride bikes more often is solved by electric bikes."

Back on the quiet Ontario street, the Specialized Turbo is doing what ebikes do best: selling itself.

Price knows that the more people who ride ebikes, the more they will want to buy them. "Just give it a chance," is his message to non-believers. He added, "Go ride one and you'll automatically think about it differently. Most people will come back realizing how this will fit into their lives."

3 Top Ebikes Reviewed



Specialized Turbo X

There's good reason this bike is called the Prius of bicycles. The design is flawless, it feels well-built and solid, and just like the powerful Toyota brand behind the Prius, the Turbo X has the marketing and research-and-development power of an industry giant backing it.

When Specialized initially made the decision to enter the ebike segment five years ago, the company knew the only way to keep its customers from revolting over the controversial technology was to try to make the best ebike ever built.

Rather than design the new project at Specialized HQ in California, a small team of city bike experts worked out of a dedicated office in Zurich. They designed a bike that looks less like an ebike than just about anything else on the market thanks to a battery integrated into the down tube and a rear-hub power-drive system rather than the more conspicuous crank-drive option.

"The first bike we wanted to make was a street bike that was relatively fast," said Chad Price, director of city bike products for Specialized. "We didn't want to make a bike for the Netherlands. We wanted a sport bike that was performance-oriented. There are plenty of people who just buy an ebike for transportation, but they're not typical Specialized customers."

The Turbo X has an alloy frame with a RockShox Paragon front fork with 50 mm of travel, which is just enough to take the edge off of bumpy roads or gravel paths. I preferred to keep the fork locked out for most rides on the Turbo, but it was a nice option to have when needed. Because of the high weight of ebikes, disc brakes are a must, and Specialized uses Formula C1s with big 180-mm rotors that bring the bike to a halt in a hurry.

What makes the Turbo X stand out are the little things, such as integrated front and rear lights that mean you never have to worry about finding and bringing yours to work for a nighttime ride home. This ebike also comes stock with a kickstand and bell, which make total sense on this type of ride.

Specialized Turbo X

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Components | SRAM X7, Formula brakes, Specialized cockpit |
| Motor | Specialized G4SCX12 |
| Battery | Down tube-mounted, 468 Wh capacity |
| Charge time | 3.5 hours |
| Weight | 22.7 kg (50 lb.) |
| Sizes | S, M, L, XL |
| Website | specialized.com |
| Price | \$4,889 |

Cube Reaction Hybrid HPA SL 29

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Components | Shimano XT, FSA |
| Suspension | RockShox Reba RL 29 |
| Motor | Bosch drive unit Performance Cruise 250 |
| Battery | Bosch power pack, 400 Wh |
| Charge time | 3.5 hours |
| Weight | 18.9 kg (42 lb.) |
| Sizes | 15", 17", 19", 21", 23" |
| Website | cube-bikes.ca |
| Price | \$4,599 |

Like the integrated, but removable battery, the Turbo's computer and display is inconspicuous, but functional. I did find it to be almost too small, though, making it hard to see some of the smaller icons.

At nearly 23 kg (50 lb.), the Turbo X is heavy even by ebike standards. But when you have the power of a rear-hub motor behind you, weight doesn't really matter. The bike has two power-assistance levels, plus a completely manual setting, and a recharge mode in which there's extra resistance on the hub as your pedal strokes work to top up the battery.

What makes the Turbo stand out is quality. Like a Prius, the bike is almost completely quiet as you pedal – even with the most power assistance available. Specialized clearly succeeded in its goal to make a fast ebike that regular cyclists will love. It's a smooth, fun ride that puts a smile on your face every time you take off.

Cube Reaction Hybrid HPA SL 29

If there's any segment of the ebike market more prone to controversy than the rest, it's mountain bikes. There are land use questions, (unproven) allegations of trail damage and peer pressure to not ride ebikes from a cycling segment born out of being one with nature. But if mountain bike riders

"What the weekend warriors may not realize though is that an ebike could allow them to ride more."



Raleigh Misceo iE 1.0

It's a city bike with a funny name, but the 2016 Raleigh Misceo iE packs in a lot of technology for a relatively low price. The Misceo is one of the first bikes available in North America to carry the new Steps drive unit by Shimano, which poured a lot of research and development resources into its ebike drivetrain entry.


The Steps system is extremely lightweight by ebike drive-unit standards, but still provides plenty of power when needed. The head unit is easy to use and read, and integrates well with the Misceo's Alfine Di2 electronic eight-speed internally geared hub.

Matching an ebike power system to electronic shifting makes for an extremely sleek bike with simple control buttons on each side of the handlebar. The combination allows for slick features, such as the option to have the bike downshift automatically by two gears when you come to a stop.

Raleigh built the Misceo on a 6061 aluminum frame with a rigid carbon fork. Other than the beefy down-tube battery, this machine looks like a regular city bike. Blue is the only colour option for 2016, but it looks fantastic.

In releasing the Misceo, Raleigh now offers one of the best commuting bikes on the market. It doesn't feel like you're riding a 19-kg bike at all, especially since the extra weight is all near the centre of the frame. That arrangement means you can pop the front and back wheels up over curbs easily and the handling is quick and responsive as you swerve to avoid potholes.

The stock Kenda tires are well-suited for any kind of weather. Slap on a pair of fenders, zip up your raincoat and you could ride this bike in a storm.

The Steps system is limited to 32 km/h in Canada to comply with ebike laws. That's not to say you can't ride this ebike faster than that, but the power assistance will only get you to 32 km/h. The rest is up to you. 

could see through the unnecessary cloud of controversy and test ride a Cube Reaction, they would realize how much of a benefit power assistance could be.

Cube Bikes may not yet be a well-known name in Canada, but the German brand is growing. In addition to a full slate of traditional bikes, the Canadian distributor is now importing Cube's impressive ebike line, including this Reaction Hybrid HPA SL 29.

The Reaction hardtail looks more like a non-powered bicycle than just about any ebike on the market. Aside from its large bottom bracket housing and down tube-mounted battery, it's clear this is, at its core, a mountain bike. Out on the trails, this fact is proven over and over again.

Despite the extra weight, the Reaction rides and handles just like a normal trail bike. With the power assistance switched off completely, you can still rip around singletrack trails and manoeuvre over logs and rock gardens with little trouble. But come to a difficult climb you might not normally be able to clear, and the Reaction Hybrid really shows its value. The highly respected Bosch drive system has four levels of power assistance to choose from, making any steep climb suddenly rideable.

The Reaction is based on an aluminum 29er frame that's matched to a RockShox Reba RL fork with 100 mm of travel. The components on the high-end SL model are mostly Shimano XT, while the cranks are FSA and the wheels are DT Swiss wrapped in Schwalbe rubber. As with most ebikes, the large down tube-mounted battery means there's no bottle cage, but that's the bike's only flaw.

The right-hand Shimano shifter still controls the XT rear derailleur like on a regular bike, while a second shifter on the left controls the level of power assistance. While riding tight singletrack trails, it was easy to switch quickly from having no assistance to getting that extra boost as needed.

| Raleigh Misceo iE 1.0 | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Components | Shimano Alfine Di2, Shimano M445 brakes |
| Motor | Shimano Steps |
| Battery | Down tube-mounted Shimano Steps, 418 Wh |
| Charge time | 4 hours |
| Weight | 18.9 kg (42 lb.) |
| Sizes | S, M, L, XL |
| Website | raleighusa.com |
| Price | \$3,500 |



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Going in Deeper

A close look at wheels with 50-mm rim depths

"You should try descending and hitting some holes."

Black Inc Black Fifty C

In some ways, Black Inc is fairly new company. You may have seen its wheels appearing in MEC stores this past spring. In 2014, John Ebsen of Atlas/Black Inc won the Taiwan KOM Challenge on a pair of Black Thirty tubulars. But the people behind the wheels have been involved with bicycles for at least 20 years. The company is based in Taichung, Taiwan. It owns three carbon-fibre factories and two aluminum CNC factories. Black Inc's global brand manager Matthew Lai, who comes from Montreal, said the company has built frames, components and wheels for many major brands. (He's not allowed to disclose those names.) In 2012, Black Inc started making its own brand of wheels.

Another Canadian behind these wheels is David Anthony. He's worked at Cervélo on frames and at FSA on wheels and is the man behind Toronto's Octto components. For Black Inc, he designed all the rim profiles. They follow the trend in aero wheels of getting wide. "It's not just about how wide it is," Lai clarified. "Anyone can make a wide rim. It's about the profile. After benchmarking our rims against Zipp and some of the other leading rim designers, I can say we are toe-to-toe with them in terms of performance, thickness and weight." The shape of each rim is specific to its depth. The Black Inc Fifty C wheels that I tested spent a year in development before their mould was made. I found the Fifty C wheels, which have a depth of 45 mm, very well behaved in a variety of conditions. I looked for side-to-side pull in different wind conditions, but couldn't find it.

The hoops not only work well in real-world winds, they are also designed to work on real roads. The tire bed keeps the tire out from the rim, to provide more rubber on the road and to protect the rims from damage and the tubes from pinch flats. "Don't avoid, just ride" is the advice Lai gave the pros who ride his wheels. While I conceded to Lai that his home roads in Montreal would have provided a greater bashing on the wheels, I did stick up for the potholes I face in Toronto. One of the longest climbs in my neighbourhood is on a pothole-riddled street that will probably stay that way for years because of seemingly endless construction. Lai asked me if I rode down it on the wheels. I hadn't. "You should try descending and hitting some holes," he said. Eventually, I did. The Fifty C wheels, which I combined with Vittoria Open Pavé 25c tires, were fine. Under less gruelling conditions, the hoops offer a great road feel. They and the DT Swiss 240s hubs are smooth and great for long rides.

Black Inc argues that the 45-mm rim depth is in a sweet spot for aerodynamics, versatility, weight and stiffness. After riding the Fifty C wheels, it's hard to argue with that. They climb over rollers with ease, they corner great and slice the wind effortlessly.

Aero gain and versatility, that's the promise of wheels with rim depths ranging from 45 to 58 mm. The rim shapes get you wind-cheating advantages, while the wheels remain light and agile. Here's a close look at three top-performing clincher sets.

by **Matthew Pioro**

| THE RIMS | Black Inc Black Fifty C | Shimano Dura-Ace C50 carbon clincher wheels | Zipp 404 Firestrike |
|----------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Rim depth | 45 mm | 50 mm | 58 mm |
| Materials | Carbon fibre | Carbon fibre and aluminum | Carbon fibre |
| Weight per set | 1,450 g | 1,672 g | 1,620 g |
| Hubs | DT Swiss 240s | Shimano Dura-Ace 9000 | Zipp 88/188v10 |
| Price | \$2,100 | \$2,450 | \$4,500 |
| Website | mec.ca | bike.shimano.com | zipp.com |

Shimano Dura-Ace C50 carbon clincher

From deep, flat-inducing potholes to gravel roads, I pushed Shimano's Dura-Ace C50 carbon clincher wheels hard. The hoops are built to withstand a lot, but I wanted to see just how much.

The rims are a mix of aluminum and carbon fibre. Alloy is extruded to create the brake track. Unlike some wheel manufacturers, Shimano doesn't machine off the hard – and in some cases, structurally important – crust-like surface that forms after extrusion. The company creates a thin and strong aluminum section from the start. It then adds the carbon fibre, not only to create the aerodynamic rim profile, but for structural rigidity and vibration absorption. With aluminum and carbon fibre at work on the wheels, you get the benefits each material has to offer. With the alloy brake track, you have excellent stopping power, far better than on a carbon-fibre track, and can use stock pads to scrub speed. The carbon fibre is, of course, lightweight and highly tunable. While the alloy does mean the wheels weigh more than full carbon-fibre hoops, the braking power and control are worth the extra mass.

Shimano calls the C50's rim profile D2. When D2 appeared on the 2013 wheels, it brought a more bulbous shape to the C50, in contrast to the V-shape rim of the earlier models, to help cut through the wind. The company says the 50-mm-deep profile reduces drag at yaw angles from zero to 15 degrees better than other aero shapes. I found the wheels behaved very well in a variety of conditions, even when the wind wasn't coming from an optimal direction.

The hubs use cup-and-cone bearings instead of cartridge bearings. Cup-and-cone may seem like an older, less sophisticated technology, but it's on Shimano wheels for well thought-out reasons. "We use cup-and-cone in all of our hubs because of their ability to offset loads placed on wheels," said Ben Pye, technical specialist at Shimano Canada. "Cartridge bearings are designed to take an up-and-down load, like the prop shaft of a machine. They are not designed to work with something that has torsional loads, wind loads and cornering loads, which is what's happening in a hub." The cup-and-cone bearings can offset the forces that come not only from riding in a straight line, but also cornering and rocking the bike back and forth when you are out of the saddle. Also, cup-and-cone bearings need much less servicing than cartridge bearings.

These wheels performed excellently on all the roads I took them down. I lucked out with a bunch of gravel rides while I had the C50s. The roads, of course, were a lot of fun. The wheels were up to the task of keeping me rolling on the rocks and ruts, as were the 25c Vittoria Open Corsa CX tires. The C50s are durable, but not at the cost of performance. Yes, you get a bit more weight with the aluminum on the rim and the cup-and-cone bearings. But every time you hop on these wheels, you'll be able to push them hard.



Zipp 404 Firestrike carbon clincher

Zipp launched the 404 Firestrike wheels in 2014. With the debut of those 58-mm-deep hoops, the company drew upon the 404 Firecrest and added new features. The Firestrike got a redesigned dimple pattern along the sides of the rim. These dimples, like the surface of a golf ball, make the passing air adhere to the wheel better than a smooth surface. The company calls this feature "aerodynamic boundary layer control."

Of the three wheels I tested, the 404 Firestrikes were the deepest. All that wind-slicing depth also means you'll feel the air catching against the wheel depending on the yaw and your speed. You do have to counter these forces with your handlebars, which is simply what happens the deeper you go with the rims. I rode with the wheels in a variety of conditions, even in some late May wind and rain that was more reminiscent of November weather. I did notice the occasional push or pull effect of side forces, but considering all the wind that was coming at me and the rim depths, I say the wheels are strikingly stable.

Another notable feature of the 404 Firestrike is the brake track. The company calls the moulded track Showstopper. It has a silicon-carbide surface to increase braking power, especially when there's water on the roads. Zips says the braking is comparable to that of aluminum surfaces. I'm not sure I agree; however, for a carbon rims, these wheels stop really well. I was impressed, even when the hoops got soaked.

I took the 404s on the same roads as the other wheels (but not the gravel that the C50s faced). The Zips offered good road feel, not harsh, but they are the edgiest of the bunch. The wheels' torsional stiffness comes not only from the tuned carbon-fibre construction, but also the hub. On each Firestrike, a 88/188v10 is at the centre and creates a two-cross lacing pattern for the Sapim CX-Ray bladed spokes. Zipp calls this a "virtual 3X lacing pattern." The 88/188v10s have the pre-load set on the bearings; the company says that pre-load doesn't have to be adjusted.

In May, Zipp announced some updates to the 404s including CeramicSpeed bearings, new titanium quick-release skewers and valve extenders by Silca that keep things from rattling in the valve holes.

Every wheel in this test would be great in a race, but there's something about the Zips that make them seem as if they are champing at the bit. It could be loud click/buzz of the freehub when you're coasting. The 404s look and feel fast, and have the design to maximize your speed.



Also check out these other mid-depth hoops

Campagnolo Bora One 50 clincher \$3,000

The "50" in the name of Campy's Bora One 50 announces the rim depth. The width is 24 mm. The number, however, that really stands out is "three," as in G3, the spoke pattern of seven three-spoke groups. The pattern keeps things stiff for excellent power transfer. The company says it eliminates vibrations, even for "heavy riders." The rims have 3Diamant brake tracks to help pads slow the wheels in dry and wet conditions. The pair weighs 1,485 g. (campagnolo.com)

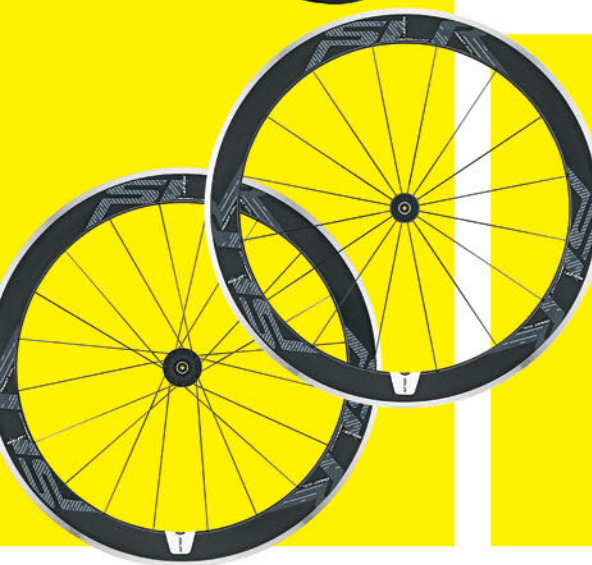


Bontrager Aeolus 5 TLR disc D3 clincher
\$3,300

In February, Bontrager unveiled its revamped Aeolus D3 line. The wheels, including the Aeolus 5, got outfitted with the company's tubeless system, TLR, and are ready for disc-brake rotors. These wheels weigh in at 1,440 g and have a 50-mm rim depth. The 19.5-mm inner width and 27-mm outer width give the tire a more semicircular, less of a light-bulb shape. That semicircle improves traction and manages the forces exerted by the wheel better. The rims are designed not only to cut the wind on the tire-leading edge, but also at the rim-leading edge. (bontrager.com)

Giant P-SLR1 Aero
\$1,200

The Giant P-SLR1 Aeros are versatile wind-cheating wheels that are just as at home in a crit as they are on a 'cross course. They mix aluminum and carbon fibre in their construction with alloy at the braking surfaces and the composite providing structure and aerodynamic shaping. The hubs have Swiss internals and sealed cartridge bearings to keep you rolling well. A pair weighs 1,800 g. A 16-spoke radial pattern supports the front wheel, while a 20-spoke two-cross pattern extends from the rear hub. (giant-bicycles.com)



Vision Metron 40 clincher \$2,840

The Metron 40s have been put through the paces on cobbled Classics. You may not ride them in such difficult conditions, but their durability will serve you on the streets or even in muddy cyclocross courses. At 1,495 g a pair, they won't weigh you down much. Their 40-mm deep rims are full carbon. You can't run anything narrower than a 23c tire, but you'd probably like a 25c tread better. (visiontechusa.com)

DT Swiss RC 46 Spline H \$2,210

The DT Swiss RC 46 Spline H wheels sport the company's hybrid rims: aluminum brake tracks and carbon-fibre rims. The "Spline" designation means the hubs use straight-pull spokes. A straight-pull spoke doesn't have the weak spot at the bend that a traditional J-bend spoke has. The depth of each rim is 46 mm. Each wheel features a 21-mm outer width and 15.9-mm inner width. The star-ratchet system ensures a quick and strong engagement of the rear wheel when you lay the power on. (dtswiss.com) 

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Ridley Debuts the 2016 Fenix SL

An endurance bike with race geometry

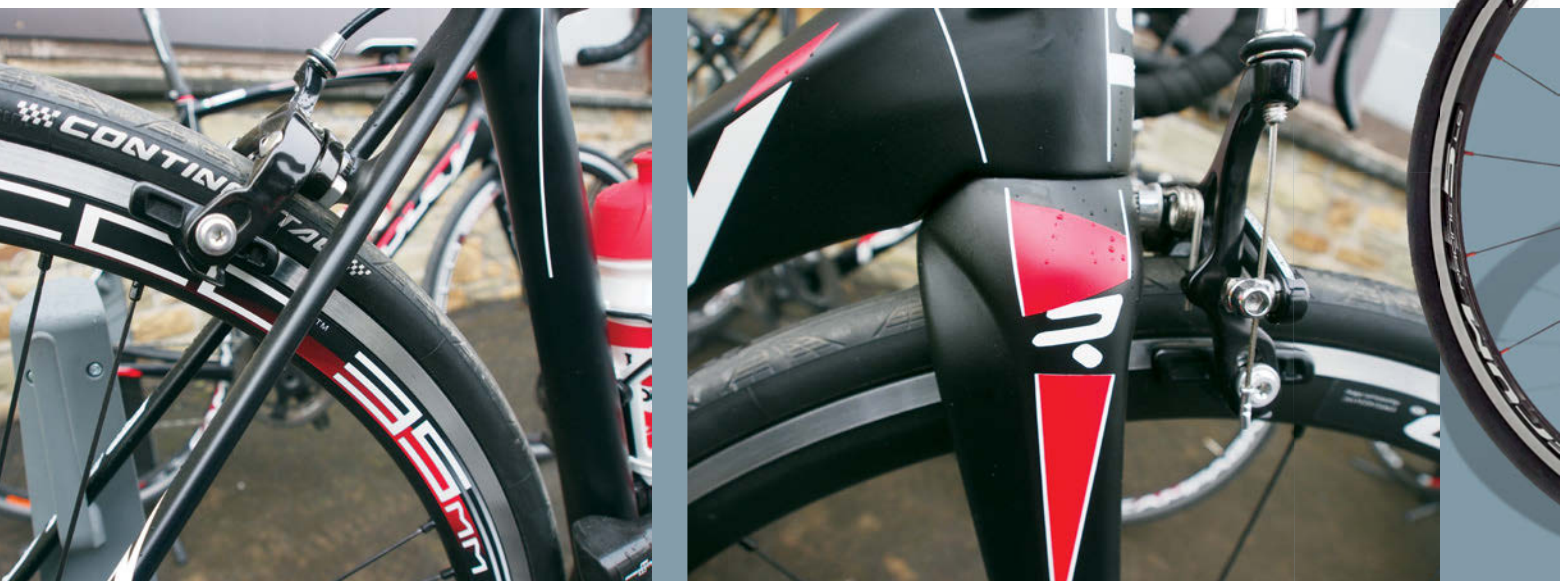
GEAR

IN DEPTH

by **Andre Cheuk**

When the Belgian bike brand Ridley debuted its new endurance road model, the Fenix SL, the Spring Classics were a natural fit for showcasing the bike. Synonymous with bad weather, epically long parcours and rough roads, Classics such as Liège-Bastogne-Liège just fit with the machine. Liège-Bastogne-Liège, also known as La Doyenne, is the oldest of the Classics. It's thought of as more of a climber's race, but it has more than its fair share of terrible roads: not as bad as the cobbles of Paris-Roubaix, just rough. The terrain of the Ardennes Classic is much more representative of what the rest of us face.

The Fenix SL took much of what Ridley learned from making the lightweight Helium SL and aero Noah SL, and built upon them. The entire rear triangle with its slim seatstays, for instance, is borrowed from the Helium SL, while the fork crown is smoothly integrated with the down tube, for a small measure of aerodynamic gain. Ridley's R&D manager Dirk Van den Berk was quick to point out that the Fenix is very different from the Noah. "The Fenix SL is not an aero road bike," he said.



Unlike many endurance bikes on the market, the Fenix SL has no special pivots or inserts to soften the ride. Ridley relied on its knowledge of carbon-fibre type, lay-up schedule and resins to ensure the Fenix SL has the ride quality to handle rough terrain. Toughness is an important attribute in the Classics, for both rider and bike. Thus, durability was a priority for the updated Fenix SL. Although the Fenix SL is 15 per cent lighter than its previous incarnation, it is not quite as light as the Helium SL, but is much more likely to survive an impact. Likewise, the carbon dropouts feature stainless-steel inserts to prevent wear.

The geometry is very close to that of the Helium. The Fenix doesn't feature a tall head tube or slack angles like many other endurance bikes do in the name of comfort. According to Van den Berk, the riders of Lotto-Soudal helped with the development of the endurance bike. "They didn't want the geometry to be drastically different from the other bikes." As a result, the only concession to comfort and stability is a slight increase in wheelbase due to a combination of longer chainstays and increased fork rake.

Ridley did design the Fenix SL with one big comfort enhancing feature – which also adds a big helping of versatility – clearance for 30-mm tires. The official line from Ridley is that the Fenix SL will accommodate tires as wide as 28 mm, but Van den Berk said, "We know it can fit bigger. Fact is that not all tire manufacturers use the same sizing methods and some are known to be bigger or smaller than their advertised size. So anything wider than 28 mm should be tested first, although in most cases it will be just fine." Van den Berk went on to add, "The Lotto-Soudal team used 30-mm Continental Tubulars on their Fenix SL bikes during the 2015 Classics."

"Ridley did design the Fenix SL with one big comfort enhancing feature – which also adds a big helping of versatility – clearance for 30-mm tires."



First-ride impressions

During the two days of the bike launch, we rode up and down the many bergs in Belgium, and wound our way on narrow roads seemingly built without any straight lines, including a 100-km day that took on some of the more famous climbs of Liège-Bastogne-Liège. I found the Fenix SL an agreeable companion – handling the varied terrain with ease – predictable and familiar even.

The familiarity came partly from an in-depth test I did of the Helium last year, which shares much in common with the Fenix. But it is also partly because the Fenix SL is not a detuned race bike, like some bikes in the endurance category. Going up the Stockeu, a 1-km climb that averages 12.5 per cent with sections that are more like 20 per cent, my legs yielded,

while the Fenix SL's stout rear triangle never did.

From my relatively brief test rides, I found the Fenix SL does offer a smooth ride, but not markedly so compared with the competition, not too different from many top carbon race bikes. My test bike, however, was only shod with 25c tires. With the ample space for much fatter rubber, it would be interesting to ride the Fenix SL with 28c or even 30c tires. The Fenix SL offers an intriguing proposition: a straightforward race bike with the handling and stiffness requisite of the breed on the one hand; an all-day adventure bike happy to go down any "road" you care to, on the other, with just a simple swap of tires. I look forward to a long-term test on the Fenix SL, and seeing how it handles some of the roads less travelled closer to home.

The Fenix SL will be available this fall at MEC. Final pricing and specs have yet to be confirmed. Expect a 105-equipped Fenix SL 50 (about \$2,475) and the Ultegra Di2 Fenix SL 20 (approximately \$5,000). 

Peddalling Beach to Beach in Baja

Test your legs on the roads of the peninsula and then put your feet up to relax

story and photos by **Matthew Kadey**

It seemed like a good idea at the time. My girlfriend, Tabi Ferguson and I sat in our kitchen analyzing Google maps and looked out the window at an angry blizzard that would be a harbinger of one of the most epic Ontario winters on record. The maps promised places with little human presence and isolated beaches. The allure of Baja's East Cape was too much to resist.

But now, under a hot sun as we push our heavily loaded touring bikes up yet another unrideable incline that resembles more of a sand dune than a road, it might have been a better idea to start our month-long tour of southern Baja riding on inland asphalt. A combination of deep sand and punishing washboard makes going up the East Cape as slow as a tortoise with nowhere to be. A kettle of vultures are circling overhead, sensing our sunburned

DESTINATION

BAJA



bodies could soon make for easy scavenging. I'm getting dehydrated, my legs are wilting and my head is throbbing. Where is a fat bike when you need one?

The narrow 1,300-km strip of land that is anchored to California known as Baja, Mexico, has long been an escape for people lured by lazy days in hammocks, fish taco glut-tony and desert or outdoor recreation opportunities on the water. Where else do you have beaches and deserts and mountains right next to one another? Baja remains rustic and rough around the edges despite an ever-increasing presence of mega-yachts, resorts and golf courses that are making it much more gentrified. Yet, Baja is still the perfect place to ride among thorny cactus, pitch our tent on resort-free beaches and gourmandize on anything that can be stuffed into a corn tortilla.



"The whole pedal along Bahia Conception is marvellous. Every turn seems to reveal an even sunnier beach view."

OPPOSITE
**Cycling along
Playa San Pedro on
Baja's West Coast**

ABOVE
**Pacific Ocean
sea lions sunning
themselves**

Indeed, after one bite of the citrusy fish tacos in the rather humdrum town of La Ribera, we quickly forgot the recent hardships of riding straight from our starting point on the outskirts of San Jose del Cabo into quicksand. Pavement has mercifully reappeared and we're pushing a good pace to Los Barriles as we whiz by giant cardon cactus that dot the landscape.

Only a few pedal strokes into Los Barriles, which is about 20 km north along the coast from La Ribera, and it's obvious that this town with a front-row view of the Sea of Cortez has become a favourite spot for bronzed retirees and their ATVs. Heck, who can blame them? Here you have world-class kite surfing, seafood so fresh it still wiggles on your plate and an overall relaxed vibe that even has the stray dogs too mellow to make much of a fuss as we ride about.

Following Los Barriles, two days of momentum-killing headwinds and inclines land us in La Paz. Southern Baja's largest city is nestled into a beautiful bay and has long been considered the place to visit to see how the real Baja functions day to day away from the glitzy resorts. As the locals go about their business, Tabi and I recharge the engines by feasting on inexpensive ceviche and chicken slathered in impossibly good *mole* sauce.

La Paz is the perfect base for a sojourn to Playa Tecolote. The 30-km ride to the end of the road along Bahia de la Paz is an assault of cerulean bays and craggy hills that could easily become a conveyor belt of scenery clichés. Yet, we are all too aware of the weapons-grade thorns that saturate this desert, ready to strike at any touring tire.



ABOVE
The San Javier
Mission

Playa Tecolote is a wide, sandy beach where graceful frigatebirds glide overhead in the steady breeze and sand crabs scurry below. To say nothing happens fast here would be a sombrero-size understatement. It's Tabi's birthday and thankfully the local pub is serving up large margaritas, which we sip with Dave and Trace from Australia, who have cycled down here from Vancouver. Our entertainment for the night is a baritone bartender and his tipsy patrons.

Back in La Paz, we decide it makes sense to take a bus north to the town of Mulegé so we can take advantage of the predominantly south-blowing winds on the ride back to the southern tip of the peninsula. But the long, lonely stretches of desert road going south necessitate the need to weigh ourselves down with copious amounts of water.

With only some innocent ups and downs, the ride to Playa Cayote is anything but epic. However, the whole pedal along Bahia Concepcion is marvellous. Every turn seems to reveal an even sunnier beach view. Most of the beaches are populated by Americans and Canadians who have set up semi-permanent RV residences. I turn to Tabi and say, "Screw Florida."

Anyone who needs to escape the tedium of a desk job should consider an excursion to Playa Cayote. The half-moon bay has a population of

de-stressed northerners who spend their days wading into the water. Locals from the surrounding towns drive in with irresistible edibles ranging from pizza to chocolate ice cream. A hungry cyclist would be hard pressed to starve here. We spend dusk watching an osprey dive toward its prey and then the evening gazing up at the stars.

Spanish missions are scattered throughout Baja. They are outposts founded by various religious orders, such as the Jesuits, between the 17th and 19th centuries with the goal of spreading the "civilized" Christian doctrine and establishing permanent Spanish settlements replete with full-scale agriculture. Uprisings were not uncommon.

Of all Baja's missions, few can top San Javier with respect to architecture or location. To reach the mission, we are faced with 40 km of rough road that cuts through the Sierra de la Giganta mountain range. We hit our first steep incline and my legs are pissed. I gear way down, hold my handlebars with a death grip and strain to pull my bike and body and bags upward. Still, complaints are few and far between. The topography is so absurdly beautiful you'd think it was sponsored by a postcard company.

We are instantly smitten with San Javier, founded in 1699, and its intricate stonework. Surrounding citrus trees are all too tempting for a weary cyclist. There are few tourists. We are welcome to camp behind the mission, but San Javier's caretaker Francisca Arce de Bastida invites us to stay with his family. A perfect opportunity to work on my embarrassingly awful Spanish, Si!

After criss-crossing the peninsula a couple times, which involves some long days in the saddle, and enjoying the seafood culinary delights offered up in the artsy town of Todas Santos, we stumble upon Playa Migrino perched on the Pacific Ocean. For our last night before riding back to the tourist chaos that is the city of Cabo and our flight home to the winter gloom, our goal is to find the perfect beach campsite. We find a magnificently long stretch of non-gentrified sand. And we have it all to ourselves. Well, that's not exactly true. As we begin to unpack our panniers and set up camp, grey whales begin to put on a show. They hurtle their massive bodies out of the water and make impressive bellyflops. Each winter, these whales migrate from northern waters to bear their young here. Soon we will be going the other way, but none of that matters now as the whales are giving us the perfect Baja farewell. Cycling Baja is about collecting such moments that will stay with you forever.

Details

When to go

The best months for cycling in Baja are the worst months for pedalling in Canada. Namely, November to March offers the most pleasant cycling. The summer months can be blazing hot.

How to get there

If you plan on only cycling in southern Baja, you can fly to the international airport in San Jose del Cabo. However, if you want a more ambitious trip, consider flying to San Diego in California and then cycling the full length of the peninsula.

Safety

For some, Mexico raises concerns about drug-related violence. Southern Baja, however, is among the safest places to tour in Mexico. Not once during our four-week trip did we feel uneasy about our personal safety.

Water

Riding in Baja can involve long stretches with no services. Never assume you'll find water over the next rise. Instead, carry more than you think you'll need. ☹️

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Mikaela Kofman

Coming back strong

by Dean Campbell

Mikaela Kofman started racing on skis, but transitioned to bikes, competing all the way through her undergrad studies at McGill University. More recently, Kofman has focused solely on racing for Scott-3 Rox Racing, for which she is the longest-standing female member of the team. Although 2015 dealt an early injury, Kofman recovered quickly and has designs on North American World Cups, as well as making her way to the world championships this year to try to prequalify for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

How do you hit the reset button after an injury like a broken arm?

Oh man, injuries suck. I'm no stranger to the trainer, so every time I get injured, I go back to my friend the trainer. On the mental side of things, injuries play games with your mind. They can make you think that you're not good enough or that you won't fully recover. But every time I get injured, I remind myself it's an opportunity to re-evaluate everything and start over new.

While you won't be riding in the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games, your Scott-3 Rox Racing teammate Erin Huck will be racing for the U.S. Having raced at the 2011 Pan Am games, what insights do you have for the race this summer?

It would have been nice to compete at a home event, given I'm from Toronto. But Emily [Batty] and Catharine [Pendrel] are both the best candidates to go. Everyone knows they will represent the Canadian flag really well. And at the end of the day, it's all about coming home with gold and silver. Both of those girls have the ability to do that and proved it last year at nationals on that course.

Every one of my competitors is also a friend, so I will be cheering for all of them and hoping they all do well. When I started coming into the sport, I dabbled in road biking at the start, but it was the friendly atmosphere that brought me to mountain biking. Whether I am cheering for Emily, or Erin, or Catharine, they're all my friends. I am pretty sure neither of the Canadians will get upset when I cheer for Erin to go faster. **C**

STATS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Age | 25 |
| Hometown | Toronto |
| Nickname | Fudge |
| Team | Scott-3 Rox Racing |
| Bikes | Scott Scale 700, Scott Spark 700, Scott Addict |

"I remind myself it's an opportunity to re-evaluate everything and start over new."

**THE PART
OF YOU
THAT WAS
SCARED
FELL OFF
4 MILES
AGO.**

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